

# **Afghanistan in the Course of History**

**Volume Two**

**By**

**Mir Gholam Mohammad Chobar**



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**Translated By**

**Sherief A. Fayez**

**AFGHANISTAN IN THE COURSE OF HISTORY, VOLUME 2**  
**BY MIR GHOLAM MOHAMMAD GHOBAR (GOBAR/GHUBAR)**  
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## Digital Publisher's note

*Afghanistan in the Course of History* is perhaps the only history of Afghanistan that has been written by a conscientious historiographer. Unlike other histories of Afghanistan, this book is not a mere narrative of the reigns of despotic monarchs, but is also a commendable tapestry of the struggles and valour of the people of Afghanistan against foreign occupiers and indigenous traitors.

The author, Mir Ghulam Mohammad Ghobar, was a historian and an indomitable patriot who suffered many tribulations and repeated incarcerations before being able to endow future generations with his enduring work. Despite confiscating every copy after printing in 1967, the traitorous autocratic despots in power in Afghanistan were not able to stifle the book.

History is being repeated in our country in a terrifyingly farcical manner. The US occupiers and their Afghan underlings are giving out that it is only the US and the so-called "world community" that can lead the people of Afghanistan towards liberty, democracy and felicity. For this reason, the perusal of the illustrious history of our people's freedom-seeking struggles against foreign aggressors and native despots becomes all the more essential.

The US and its lackeys intend our younger generations to be brought up emasculated and spineless, unaware of their remarkable history. By digitalizing and widely publishing valuable literary works, Mohsin Publications is striving to play a part in promoting their awareness and sense of identity. Subsequent to digitizing the first and second volumes of *Afghanistan in the Course of History* in Persian, we are proud to hereby present the English version of the second volume of this enduring work.

These files contain scanned facsimiles of the printed book in PDF format.

Mohsin Publications acknowledges with gratitude the voluntary contributions of all who took part in making this presentation possible. Special thanks go to Hashmat Khalil Ghobar and Donia Ghobar for giving permission for the digitized publication of this book.

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## **Sources**

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Printed materials are cited within the related texts.

## **Cover**

**Kabul Citadel (BALA HESAR):** The symbol of resistance by the people of Afghanistan against foreign invaders.

## **A Note by the Publisher about *Afghanistan in the Course of History***

The first volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History*, banned after its first publication in Kabul in 1967, covers Afghanistan from the start of its historical period to early twentieth century (the end of King Amanollah's reign). The second or the last volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History* covers the critical and eventful years of Afghanistan during the second quarter of the twentieth century (Nadir Shah dynasty).

The second volume, which actually is the remaining chapters of the first volume, was not published at that time because of the intense oppression in the country. Due to this link between the two volumes, the author, Mir Gholam M. Gobar, did not write an introduction to the second volume, nor did he have an opportunity to add to it necessary supplementary materials. The second volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History* is published in the same form that my late father had advised me and had left before his death. I have only added part of his introduction to the first volume, his dedication note and a biographical account about him at the end of the book.

It should be mentioned that the second volume — like the first one, which was published first in Kabul in three thousand copies and later seven times outside of the country in fifty thousand copies — is published exactly according to the original manuscript without any tampering and change. *Afghanistan in the Course of History* is indeed the first scholarly, analytical and true history of the oppressed and struggling people of Afghanistan.

*Hashmat Khalil Gobar*  
*February 2001*

## **Translator's Note**

About the translation, I should mention that I have tried my best to present a faithful rendition of the original. To eliminate some of the stylistic problems in the translation, I have changed, when necessary, a number of passive sentences to active ones without tampering with their meanings. For an easier reading of the book, I have also compressed or shortened some long sentences and paragraphs when necessary. Throughout the book, the author uses the term “roushanfikir” (intellectual) in a political context. For a more precise understanding of term, I used the terms “dissident,” or “opposition,” or “intellectual opposition.” It is hoped that this translation, despite its flaws, will provide a fluent reading for many readers.

At the end, I wish to thank Mr. Hashmat Khalil Ghobar, who granted me the permission to translate the work. He also compared the translation with the original version and made some useful comments, which I incorporated in the text.

*Sherief A. Fayez*

## **Dedication**

Dedicated to the combating patriots of Afghanistan — to those who are urged by the country's historical and social conditions to stand in the forefront of the army of progress and new movements in order to secure a modern life for the society.

*M. Ghoobar*

## Introduction by the Author

With the evolutionary course of human societies, the method of historiography has also evolved. Today historiography rests on the pillars of multi-faceted studies and analyses. History is no longer restricted to recording the inaccurate and strange episodes of the lives of a few persons. We are no longer in that time when man looked for awe and wonder in nature, and lost himself in the unseen metaphysical ocean. However, this evolution and change did not require history to be always true and reliable because the compiling factor of history is man, who is ruled by his own social conditions.

The changes in the modern ages, which have affected all aspects of social life, have brought diverse products, which ultimately resulted in capitalism in the Western world. In the shadow of militarism, capitalism changed to an extensive colonization of vast areas of the globe. The victory of this system cast a shadow over man's life, his arts, history, and literature, with history, like the arts, assuming a commercial shape.

When the malady of nationalism in Europe stood beside capitalism, the world political history also assumed a distorting shape, with historians claiming all virtues for their own countries and relegating all vices to the others. Furthermore, when the European nationalism was confronting the East, it was assuming a continental fascist face, seeing Europe as the creator and promoter of culture and civilization and the East as barbaric and the enemy of civilization. In addition, it was this occupying Europe that used its superior science and technology, with its modern civilization, in plundering the East, destroying its agriculture, industry and arts — thus impeding the evolutionary course of progress in the East.

Of course, with the fire of campaign against the European imperialism still burning in Asia and Africa, the Eastern people have not yet stopped their liberating struggles. The people of Afghanistan, politically and culturally invaded by imperialism since the nineteenth century, have been in the forefront of the campaign against imperialism.

In Asia, we are facing two groups of Western historians and writers, the first group representing the true scholars and the second one serving the goals of imperialism. Members of the first group are those who have gone deep into the knowledge, literature, history, culture and language of the East, reviving the buried civilizations. These humanitarian scholars, who are the sound products of the new world culture and civilization, have served the cause of world knowledge. The ancient histories of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Afghanistan, Iran, etc. are indebted to them.

Members of the second group, ignorant of the history of the East, either follow the Western imperialist writers or dedicate their knowledge to serving the politics and imperialism of the West in the East — the politics and imperialism that had added the sectarianism of Christianity and the zeal of European fascism to its economic and political ambitions. Therefore, the history of the Asian nations became a toy of imperialist interests, with a curtain of ignorance, distortion, fallacy, and slander hiding the face of realities.

This was the way Afghanistan, facing such an invasion, was defined and introduced to the world: "Afghanistan is a newly born state created by the demand of the policy of the balance of powers between the Czarist Russia and Britain. (Of course, this rule does not apply to the Hindu Kosh range, the Amu River, and the Hermand River.) This newly born country, which consists of thousands of diverse tribes, scores of different languages and religious sects, does not have a history before the eighteenth century."

The Afghan people, who are the essential factor of historical evolution, as during the last one thousand and five hundred years, with campaigns and uprisings against feudalism and foreign aggression, have passed difficult stages. They also rose against imperialist invasions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and — despite the defeat or surrender of the ruling class to the enemy — they swept their enemies out of the land. Still the dominance of feudal regime and the heavy blows of imperialism were extending the stagnation of life in society. For this reason, Afghanistan is still in the rank of the most backward countries in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We study the history of our country to have a proper understanding of our today's conditions so that the young Afghan fighters in their forward movement may consciously choose a better line. It is history that brings to light the evolutionary course of a society.

**Mir Gholam M. Ghobar**  
Kabul City, June 1967



## **Chapter I**

### **Other Reactions by the Regressive Elements and Forces (May 14, 1929 - October 15, 1929)**

#### **1- Habibollah Kalakani's Rebel Government**

##### **After the Fall of the Amanollah Regime**

Habibollah Kalakani (Bache Saqqao) carried out his first mission after King Amanollah was forced to leave Afghanistan for Italy through the enemy territory (India). Only an irrational force, such as Saqqao, could have drawn his sword against the king so successfully. Now came the ultimate mission of the rebel regime—a mission that would bring about the downfall of Bache Saqqao (the son of Water Carrier) by himself and simultaneously pave the way for the emergence of a new anticipated regime.

New activities began and foreign agents, who had brought Saqqao to power, were now reversing their course of action. All political and religious institutions continued to support secretly or openly Bache Saqqao until King Amanollah remained within the country's boundary. Azimollah Terjaman, the governor of Qataghan in northern Afghanistan, turned over that province to Bache Saqqao, while Gholam Nabi Charkhi was forced out of Balkh by letters of threat. A number of clerics and preachers, who had supported King Amanollah before, were now gathering under the Black Banner of "Amir Habibollah Saheb, Servant of the Faith of the Prophet of Allah!" Amrudin Hindi, the governor of Paktia province, was now serving in the northern provinces in the guise of the chief cook of Seyyid Hosayn, Saqqao's deputy. Mr. Mengal Sing, priest of Kabul Shurbazaar Temple, having set aside religious fanaticism, was now sitting next to Bache Saqqao, both drinking from the same pot and eating from the same plate. Hazrat Nur al-Meshayekh Mojadaddi, with several thousands of his armed disciples in Paktia, had ordered a march against Amanollah in Ghazni instead of launching an attack on Saqqao in Kabul. The British government was not allowing the Waziri tribesmen to enter Paktia against Saqqao. In other words, all activities against Saqqao were being defused.

Mohammad Nadir (army chief of Amanollah and father of Mohammad Zaher Shah) hurried from Paktia to Lugal to capture Kabul before Amanollah's arrival. However, this strategy did not materialize because the forces of Nur al-Meshayekh (the Soleyman Khil tribesmen) had stopped the forces of King Amanollah in Ghazni. With saboteurs operating within the palace and the army, Amanollah had to retreat after his forces dispersed.

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On April 26, 1929, the king retreated. On April 27, Ghousaddin intentionally abandoned the conquered field in the Shah Mazar-e Lugar, and Nadir retreated from Lugar to Paktia. Although Shah Mahmud (brother of Nadir) had triumphantly reached Zarghunshar in Lugar, he also returned to Paktia. However, they did not want to see the downfall of Bache Saqqao until the king was out of the country. Without counting the secret agents, those who were openly involved in digging a trap for the king were Abdol Ahad Mahyar Werdaki (minister of the interior), Ahmad Ali Ludin (governor, former ambassador and future army chief), Mohammad Yaqub (court minister), etc.

The Amanollah regime was entirely eliminated after his departure from the country on May 25. He was followed by Gholam Nabi Charkhi on May 31. The time had come now for the implementation of the second stage – the stage of preparing the nation to accept another regime. Accomplishing such a mission by Saqqao, a simple-minded Muslim, surrounded by agents of imperialism under the guise of his sincere advocates, was not a difficult task. Therefore, the situation suddenly reversed. The new plan was implemented to its last phase for a period of no more than four months.

Those who had earnestly supported Habibollah and introduced him as Servant of the Faith of the Prophet of Allah were now unanimously calling him a “ruthless bandit and the enemy of the Afghan people.” The clerics stopped praising him, as well as his former advocates, such as Khaja Babu, Malek Mir Alam, Baba Mengal Sing and others, who had sincerely served him before. The very few who remained loyal to him, with a sense of heroism, were now being taken with their master to the gallows, such as Sherjan, Mohammad Sadiq Sahebzadeh, and others.

This political scheme was as skillfully executed as a stage drama with great ease. The British government did not want to have a strong and progressive Afghanistan in the neighborhood of the golden India even though it took Britain ten years to prepare such a plot. What could have prevented Britain from having its wish? The answer is, of course, the presence of a mature and experienced government in Afghanistan in control of its social leadership—a government with goodwill and good deed.

However, admittedly, the social, political, economic, cultural, and historical conditions—with one hundred years of isolation and its geographical condition—had put Afghanistan in a dangerous situation.

Under these conditions, to hope for the emergence of an adequate and competent government was to ask for a miracle, particularly at a time when the British global expansionist policy with regard to Afghanistan was aimed at not only destroying every local talent but also at blocking any ordinary and gradual change. Who does not know why the government of Dost Mohammad lasted more than twenty years in Afghanistan, while the governments of Zaman Shah and Amir Shir Ali collapsed within a few years? Amir Abdur Rahman and Amir Habibollah

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together ruled for forty years, but Amir Amanollah's reign did not last more than ten years.

Since it began to rule India, Britain always tried to dictate Afghanistan's foreign policy. The Russian Tsarist policy, like that of the Soviet Union at that time, was a defensive policy against the British Empire in Afghanistan, but the British policy in Afghanistan and Central Asia was offensive. Therefore, Afghanistan alone had to resist the British, and this was a heavy burden on the Afghan people, who had to pay a crippling price in order to protect their identity and national independence.

Considering the political flaws of the Amanollah regime, the British final blow on Afghanistan was expected and inevitable. It was not a random or adventurous event, for blundering in international politics is not excusable. A powerful state imposes its policy on another state; and if resisted, it resorts to war—either to political war or military war. Of course, in defense of its national rights, a nation, so small as Afghanistan, but brave, has to hold out against wars even when facing defeat because defeat in a war with a powerful and aggressive enemy only adds to the honor of the small nation. What lowers the honor of a nation is surrender to the aggressor before the defensive sword is drawn. Obviously, the resistance and persistent campaign of a nation against imperial aggression will eventually bring about its defeat.

However, Amanollah's young government had far less experience, awareness, and objectivity than the new states of Russia, Turkey, Poland, and Germany, which had been created at the same time. Therefore, the new regime committed a number of political mistakes, which resulted in harming the country later.

At the early stage of the political interaction with the Soviet Union, which had begun with great sentiment—when the Afghan government accepted a close relationship with the Soviet Union in contrast to Britain—King Amanollah was supporting the King of Bokhara, Amir Seyyid Alem, by providing him some military assistance. The Afghan government had also established relationship with the famous Anwar Pasha, who had entered Turkistan and proclaimed "Pan-Turkism." This relationship annoyed the Soviet Union even though both Seyyid Alem Khan and Anwar Pasha had been defeated, with one taking refuge in Afghanistan and the other killed there. Nevertheless, the existing circumstances and the politics of the time did not allow the continuation of strained relations between the two countries.

On the other hand, the Amanollah regime was providing much more support than it could afford for the liberationist movement and its activities in British India. Sometimes it was sending money and arms to the resistance across the eastern border.

Therefore, the British government resorted to serious activities and acts of sabotage against the Afghan government in the eastern border areas. It gained the collaboration of a number of reactionary clerics and tribal chiefs, together with its old experienced friends in Afghanistan. Soon corruption and mismanagement gripped the Afghan bureaucracy. Underground and intelligence circles, with

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powerful officials in disguise, who were corrupting the system, were formed within the government. In addition, propaganda against King Amanollah and his new government began to spread all over the country.

The government, being confused, was constantly moving away from the people toward the brink of destruction. Eventually the Amanollah government collapsed. Thus, the British government no longer worried about the Afghan front. It knew that it was not able to militarily occupy Afghanistan and deprive its people of their independence. (By their constant campaigns and uprisings, the Afghan people had defeated the British in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.) The purpose of the British in creating and spreading this commotion was to install such a government in Afghanistan that would preserve its apparent independence and yet incline toward Britain and refrain from getting close to Soviet Union. At the same time, the new government was supposed to be too regressive to allow any change, social progress, and Afghan national strength and unity. The inexperience of the Afghan ruler in foreign and domestic policy and the duplicity of some top government officials paved the way for the British government to completely attain its goal in Afghanistan.

When the regime blundered, the people, offended by it, stopped supporting it. Then there was the tragedy of uprisings by a gang of blind forces, which lacked the wisdom and competence of the deposed regime that had ruled the country for ten years. The Saqqao rebel regime lasted less than ten months-a bridge between Amanollah 's revolutionary regime and Nadir's regressively conservative regime.

## **2- Downfall of the Rebel Government**

After Amanollah left Afghanistan, the stage of supporting Saqqao ended, but a new stage of weakening him began. King Amanollah, who had left Kabul for Kandahar on January 14, 1929, retreated from the battle in Ghazni on April 26, 1929. He left Afghanistan on May 23, 1929. Within this period of four months and ten days, through a network of scheming hidden hands, Saqqao was able to bring under his direct control the provinces of Qataghan-Badakhshan, Balkh, Maimana, Herat, Kandahar, and Kabul. However, in Hazarajat, there was still a local resisting force led by Amanollah's younger brother Amin Jan, Khaja Hedayetollah Khan, and a number of local chiefs, but it did not pose a serious threat to the rebel government. With a part of Hazarajat, having given its allegiance to the new government, Amin Jan had to retreat from the area and later went to India.

In Nangarhar province, local differences flared up. At the same time, the rebel government's supporters were resisting the insurgency. The same situation prevailed in Paktia. In Nangarhar, Governor Ali Ahmad declared himself king, but he did not succeed even though he won the support of a large number of people because the government intended to replace Amanollah was to be established in Paktia, not in Nangarhar. A massive propaganda was launched against Ali Ahmad, who was slandered as being immoral and an alcohol drinker, while his tribal Khugyani, Shinwari, and Mohmandi supporters were pitted against one another.

As a result, the army force that Ali Ahmad sent to Kabul lost ground and dispersed near Mulla Omar Caves. The Shinwari support force, affected by the opposition propaganda, moved against the governor instead of supporting him. His tribal Khugyani friends, Malek Mohammad Shah and Malek Mohammad Jan, were both killed in a conflict, incited by their enemies, when they dispatched a force to support the governor. The force disintegrated before reaching the governor. Mohammad Gol Khan Mohmand, commander of the Amanollah army in Nangarhar, and Seyyid Hassan were overtly leading the opposition against the governor.

Finally, the governor, isolated from the people, fled to Laghman and Konar to re-organize his activities. The opposition continued to frame him under malicious propaganda by showing to the public a bottle of wine and accusing him of immorality, but the ambitious governor was too drunk by his dream of gaining the throne and the crown to long for the real wine. Since he declared himself king from January 16, 1929, the day after Amanollah's abdication, until his arrest in Kandahar, not only he stopped drinking alcohol, but he also resorted to such demagogic acts as taking ablution on the rooftop of a public building and praying with a congregation. Feeling the threat of his strong opponent, he went to Kandahar through Konar and Peshawar. In Kandahar, he repeated the declaration after Amanollah left Afghanistan

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on May 25 At this time, the rebel government arrested him, brought him to Kabul, and executed him.

While being paraded in the streets of Kabul, with tied hands and bare feet and head, he walked proudly before the watching eyes of the public, with his twisted mustache and his stature as manly as it was before. Although shopkeepers and pedestrians did not like his past life, today they watched with admiration his courage in the face of death. In a short while, the roar of a cannonball was heard. Fired from its mouth, his body was scattered to pieces in the air. Of course, like Ali Ahmad, many others who dreamed of becoming king or taking a similar course faced a similar fate.

Saqqao drove out of Afghanistan King Amanollah and his royal assistant, Sardar Enayetollah. Later Sardar Hayetollah was killed in Saqqao prison.

### **The Paktia Front**

At first Saqqao gained an upper hand in Paktia, the strongest center of the opposition to his regime, after Amanollah left the country. The people of Katawaz, Zormat, and Soleyman Khil, led by Nur al-Meshayekh Mojadaddi, actively supported the rebel government against King Amanollah. The Ahmadzai tribesmen, led by Mir Ghousaddin Khan, were also supportive of Saqqao. In addition, the Dara Khil tribesmen of Jadran, the people of Sohak, and others supported Saqqao, while the army chief of Paktia was General Mohammad Sadiq Sahebzadeh, an important pillar of the Saqqao government. Those who had supported Amanollah government-such as Abdol Hakim Khan Barakzai, former governor of the province-were now without any base or political destiny.

When on March 8, 1929, Nadir returned to Paktia from Nice in France through India, he established in Jaji a new and important base against Saqqao. A number of his men became active at the base-such as Allah Nawaz, an immigrant from Multan (later became a royal assistant, ambassador, and minister in the new government); the Indian Qorban Hosayn Gadiwan (Coach Driver), with the alias Seyyid Abdollah Shahji (later became Nayeb Salar or Commander-in-Chief); Mirza Nowroz (later became royal secretary, minister, and ambassador); Abdol Jalil, Nawab Lugari, Abdol Ghani Sorkhabi, Abdol Ghani Gardizi (later became chief of the Palace Guard and then governor of Kandahar); Haji Mirza M. Akbar Yusofi (later became minister of commerce); and a number of men at the base that demanded the overthrow of the rebel government. The base, also opposing the restoration of the Amanollah government, wanted to establish a new monarchy, but it did not say so until it won complete victory in Kabul.

At any rate, internal and foreign political hands did not want the overthrow of Saqqao as long as Amanollah was inside Afghanistan and the restoration of his

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regime was possible even though Nadir, in comparison to other opponents, had launched a stronger campaign. They knew that it was the ruthless hand of Saqqao, who, with terror and barbarity, regardless of the existing domestic and foreign circumstances, could draw the sword against the king until the last minute. No other internal force, including Nadir, was able to directly stand against Amanollah.

Therefore, as long as the king was in Afghanistan, Nadir's efforts in Paktia were not successful. The fire of local and regional differences was aflame, and there was meager funding for the campaign. Nur al-Meshayekh and the Soleyman Khil tribesmen were not yet cooperating with Nadir. Mir Ghousaddin and Ahmadzai tribesmen did not refrain from causing friction and interruption in the campaign. As Nadir's envoy for India, Haji M. Akbar Yusofi-former general consul to Delhi and future minister of commerce-traveled to India to ask the British government not to block to Nadir the support of the Waziri and the Massoudi tribesmen across the Durand-line. The British viceroy, refusing to receive the envoy, said the other side of the talks in the case was Sir Richard Maconachi, the Parachanar Political Agent-who later became British minister at the Nadir court-who dawdled in the talks and displayed an English style of snobbishness.

One time when walking outside his residence, wearing Afghani clothes, Maconachi saw Mr. Yusofi arriving from a trip. Sarcastically he addressed Yusofi in Pashtu: "Haji Saheb, has Nadir also arrived?" (This was the time when King Amanollah was still in Kandahar and Nadir's efforts in Paktia against Saqqao had not yet borne any results.)

A hand-written letter from Jaji by Nadir to Hazrat Fazl Omar Nur al-Meshayekh Mojadaddi in Katawaz sheds light on the conditions in Paktia and on Nadir himself:

*(20 Safar, 1348)*

*Your Revered Greatness, Hazrat Saheb:*

*This devotee of yours has sometimes been in retreat and sometimes in victory for our armies. Nevertheless, a great deal of damage has been inflicted on the Saqqaois. We have great hope that your honor will assist this "ignorant" nation from your great courage and enthusiasm, so that Allah may help this tossing ship reach the desired shore. What else can I say!*

*Sincerely yours,  
Mohammad Nadir*

Sardar Shah Mahmud (brother of Nadir) writes from Jaji another letter to Nur al-Meshayekh in Katawaz:

*(Dated 5 Rabi al-Thani 1348)*

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*Your grand, esteemed and kind honor, informed of facts, Hazrat Saheb Nur al-Meshayekh, I am devoted to you for the sake of God. How longer will you not pay attention! We, several brothers, Sepah Salar (Nadir), Shah Wali Khan and Shah Mahmud Khan in Paktia, with Mohammad Hashem Khan in Nangarhar) up to now we have done what we could. If you do not extend a hand, we will also retire. Afghanistan, our family and your family, will be swept away.*

*Sincerely yours,  
Shah Mahmud Khan.*

(These two letters were included in a dossier of the documents of Hazrat Nur al-Meshayekh. The dossier is now owned by M. Masum al-Mojadaddi, son of Fazl M. Khan - Shams al-Meshayekh Mojadaddi.)

With Amanollah's withdrawal from Ghazni on April 1929 and his departure from the country in the following month, the old policy on Afghanistan changed. For example, without a military defeat, the king retreated in April from Ghazni, facing an internal conspiracy.

On May 15, Saqqao's envoy (Abdol Latif Mahajer Kuhati) went to Paktia to negotiate and compromise with Nadir. On May 25, the king left the country and the following day another envoy of Saqqao (Alishah, a cousin of Nadir) arrived in Paktia, submitting a personal letter from Saqqao to Nadir. The letter had called for reconciliation and Nadir's participation in the government. On June 13, the tribes of Ahmadzai, Tuta Khil, and Mengal Mirzaka changed side by declaring their support for Nadir.

Between June 22-July 22, a secret military plan was designed and carried out against Saqqao. The plan was to draw and engage the forces of the rebel government towards Paktia and Nangarhar in order that the capital may lose its defensive forces and the enemy may be finished off by a sudden and crushing attack-particularly at this time when the minister of war, Seyyid Hosayn, was engaged in northern provinces away from the capital.

Until now, Hazrat Nur al-Meshayekh, being in command of the forces of Soleyman Khil, had managed to prevent them from helping Saqqao and from clashing with Nadir. He wanted to take them out of the arena in a neutral way. Later, however, he went to the town of Gardiz to hold talks with Shah Wali (brother of Nadir).

The rebel government, which on June 13 had launched an attack under the command of General M. Sadiq Sahebzadeh, was defeated in Gardiz, with the general being wounded. It launched another attack on June 25 with a stronger force. Although the commander of the front, Shah Wali, had fled, the forces of Saqqao were kept at bay in Gardiz and the surrounding areas. The engagement lasted until the fall of Kabul.



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The same game was played in Nangarhar, where Hashem (Nadir's brother), with a number of other active men, had assembled a powerful force. Throughout the province, a number of influential men were working in favor of Nadir, among whom were: Mulla Saheb Chaknur, Padshah Gol Khan, Mohammad Gol Khan Mohmand, Seyyid Hassan, Mirza Payendeh Mohammad, Habibollah Pacha, Seyyid Ahmad Pacha, Seyyid Habib Pacha, Seyyid Abdol Hamid Pacha, Khan Zaman (Army Chief), Mohammad Amin, Abdol Razaq, and others. When Hashem arrived at the Turkham border, 1200 Mohmandi and Shinwari tribesmen, led by Pacha Gol Khan, received him. Mulla Saheb Chaknur prepared a big banquet for him at Chaknur.

Subsequently, local differences ended. The hostility between Payendeh Mohammad of the Jabar Khil tribe and Sa'idollah of the Masti tribe, with the quarrels of the Daulatshahi people with Haji Daulat and the hostility of the people of Sorkhrud with the people of Khugyani and so on, ended with truce and reconciliation. All delegates of Mohmand, Rudat, and Chaparhar tribes took part in the grand jirga (council) and united. A delegation, led by M.Gol Khan Mohmand, was sent to Paktia to help form a united front against the rebel government and to coordinate the activities of the two provinces.

After talking with Nadir and receiving information about the plan of the future move, M.Gol returned to Nangarhar. On July 1, Shahji Seyyid Abdollah had arrived from Paktia to Nangarhar for the same purpose. According to the new plan, M.Gol Khan, with a Khugyani force, was assigned to march toward Kabul up to Menar-e Chakari (within a few miles from Kabul) to attract the attention of the rebel government to the Nangarhar front. This operation carried out on July 20, which was more like a hit-and-run strategy, resulted in the defeat and dispersion of the Nangarhar forces.

M.Gol Mohmand, with Khan Zaman, Abdol Razaq Mohammadzai, Seyyid Abdol Hamid Pacha, and Seyyid Habib Pacha, went to Paktia, which had become the center of political and military movements. In Nangarhar, however, the news of M. Gol Khan's defeat had infuriated the people and caused them to form new rallies. The Khugyani and other people in Nangarhar assembled about 1000 volunteers. Hashem Khan put them under the command of Amir M. Nuristani, while Jailani of Chaparhar, who was an opponent of the Amanollah regime, with chiefs of the tribes of Shinwari and Hesarshahi, declared their readiness to attack Kabul. The delegate of the Afridi tribe, Seyyid Anwar Pacha, went to Hashem Khan to pledge his readiness to attack Kabul. The Khugyani people had proposed to Hashem to appoint as his assistant Seyyid Hassan and to send M.Gol to Tizin (Mohmand had arrived in Nangarhar with new information from Paktia).

Despite all this rallying and excitement of the Nangarhar people, Hashem Khan could not attack Kabul by disregarding the given plan. They had decided that the first attack and the capture of Kabul had to come from the Paktia front, led by

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Nadir, because of its proximity to Kabul. For this reason, Hashem instructed the Mohmandi and Afridi tribal forces to remain in their positions until further notice, which he did not issue it.

Instead, Saqqao was encouraged by his friends and supporters to attack Nangarhar, where, they said, the people were ready to surrender. Thus, the forces of Saqqao began to move toward Nangarhar. In the Gandomak and Sorkhrud areas of Nangarhar, in a battle that lasted four days, the Khugyani forces, unaware of the original plan of the war, were defeated. Hashem Khan escaped to Safid Koh (White Mountain) and M.Gol escaped to Paktia. The Saqqao forces captured Nangarhar and Jalalabad, where they remained engaged until Kabul came under attack by the Paktia front.

On the way to Kabul to reinforce the beleaguered army, the armed people of Nangarhar repeatedly attacked the Saqqao forces, making them leave Jalalabad. When finally this army of Saqqao-led by General M. Khan known as the Bandit-reached Butkhak (within a few miles from Kabul), the Paktia forces had already occupied the capital. He had to move with his army toward Perwan and Tagau, where it quickly dispersed.

The new plan was carried out quickly. On one hand, the large force of Saqqao with general M. Sadiq with were pulled toward Paktia was kept intensely engaged. On the other hand, Nadir had managed to settle local differences in the province. On July 20, 1929, the Khugyani forces were defeated in Menar Chakari and the following day Allah Nawaz Hindi from Jaji crossed the Durand-Line into the Waziri area to ask for support. Seyyid Abdollah Shahji Hindi became Shah Mahmud's deputy. From August 15, the *Islah* newspaper began to be published by Mirza Nowroz in Paktia. On August 20, the Paktia force in the area between Mirzaka and Machalfo defeated a Saqqaoi force. During the third week of September, ten thousand Waziri and Massoudi armed men arrived in Paktia.

Shah Mahmud in a letter (dated 5 Rabi al-Thani 1348 Lunar Year) from Jaji to Nur al-Meshayekh in Katawaz wrote:

*... From Nangarhar a large force of Mohmandi, Afridi, Khugyani, Sorkhrudi, and Shimwari people are on the move to attack Kabul in two or three days. From Waziristan also a larger army has been dispatched, about 10,000 of them have reached the Khost Chahawni and the rest are on the way. More than 20,000 men have been deployed. At this time, a move from the Soleyman Khil people will be for the best. Let the Soleyman Khil people know about the rumors with regard to their trade in India.*

*Sincerely yours,  
Shah Mahmud Khan.*

(The original copy of this letter is in the dossier of the documents of M. Masum al-Mojadaddi, son of Shams al-Meshayekh Saheb.)

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As for the rumors mentioned in the letter, it is a reference to the contents of a letter signed by Nadir, which was spread among the Soleyman Khil people. In the letter, Nadir had warned about the closure of the trade routes of the Soleyman Khil tribesmen with India. Trade with India was very much the source of their prosperous life. The letter warned that a Muslim-Hindu delegation from India, led by Maulawi Thanaollah, had arrived in Jaji to tell Nadir that it would ban supporters of Saqqao from conducting trade transactions in India. The delegation was ready to negotiate with the Soleyman Khil. Either the people or their representatives should come to Jaji or the delegation would be willing to hold talks with them in Katawaz.

(The original of this letter is in the dossier of M. Masum Saheb.)

In the same month (23 August-22 September), 10,000 rupees were sent to Jaji by Abdol Hakim, the former Afghan Trade agent in Peshawar. Abdol Ghani Sorkhabi Lugari provided food for 15,000 men along the Paktia-Kabul route. At the end of the month, Mehrdel Kandahari, a staunch supporter of King Amanollah, rose against the Saqqaoi army in Kandahar, massacring several hundreds of its soldiers. Mehrdel, who had taken control of the local government of Kandahar, passed the leadership to Hashem Khan when he arrived from Safid Koh. He did so because some supporters of Nadir had persuaded him and because he still felt that Nadir was still serving the old king.

On September 28, Shah Wali led a force from Paktia, with 5000 Waziri men, into the Khoshi area of Lugar without any resistance. General M. Omar Sur-whom Amanollah had needlessly offended before-was now a powerful Saqqaoi commander, with his forces concentrated in the Darwish area of Lugar. Surprisingly, he sided with Nadir by announcing that he would not allow his forces to attack the Nadir army while passing through Lugar toward Kabul. On September 30, the army from Paktia captured the Wakhjan Pass and crushed the Saqqaoi defensive force. This defensive force, comprising six battalions, had been deployed in Lugar to protect the pass. At this time, a number of armed Luri tribesmen, having crossed the Durand-Line, reached Ali Khil to support Paktia.

These sudden and carefully deployed moves in Paktia, which were threatening Kabul directly, had caused fear and panic to the Saqqao government. Up to now, Saqqao was given the impression that his forces were advancing throughout the country, including Nangarhar and Paktia and that Nadir's small force was not posing any threat to the capital. At this time, Nadir's forces were in control of the Wakhjan Pass, and on October 2, they captured the town of Madaqha in Lugar. Six battalions were engaged in defending the Madagha, while the rebel government was busy deploying a new force from the provinces of Qataghan, Nangarhar, and Gardiz to reinforce its force in Kabul.

On October 5, the vanguard of the Paktia force, led by Allah Nawaz Hindi, arrived in Chahar Asiab within a few miles from Kabul. The next day, Shah Wali

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arrived with sizable number of armed men from Paktia and the Waziri tribe. On October 7, the war broke out in Kabul. A small number of Saqqaoi soldiers were fiercely fighting the invaders in the Asmayee and Sherderwazeh mountains and on Balahesar hill.

Allah Nawaz Multani and M.Gol Mohmand led the Paktia and Waziri force in the Bani Hesar front. Shah Wali was leading the Chahlstoon and Dar ul-Aman front. Saqqao was personally fighting in the battlefield. During the night, when the defending force of Saqqao, outnumbered by the marching force, went inside the Arg, with a number of the guards still surrounding the mountain heights and hills, Azam Khan, a professional friend of Saqqao, was in charge of guarding the Sherdarwazeh Fort.

However, he had already struck a secret deal with the invading force by surrendering his stronghold. (For this reason, the Nadir government gave him the rank of major general, but later put him in prison, where he died.) At night, bands of the invading force occupied the Balahesar hill and the mountain summits.

The following day, October 8, Saqqao, with a few of his remaining officers and soldiers put up a brave resistance in Balahesar, Chaman, and Gozargah, while the invading force had occupied the whole city. Saqqao, with his friends, remained inside the Arg. In this way, the Paktia force was able to reach Kabul and capture it within ten days. (Mohayedine Anis, founder and writer of the *Anis* newspaper mentions a brief note in his book *Crisis and Salvation*.)

On October 9, the Arg came under siege, while Saqqao was still waiting for reinforcement troops from Gardiz, Nangarhar, Ghazni, Kuhdaman, Kuhestan, and Qataghan provinces. Seyyid Hosayn, the Saqqao war minister, with an adequate force, had left Qataghan for Kabul, and the retreating force from Nangarhar was hurrying toward the capital. Sherjan, the court minister and Malek Mohsen, the governor of Kabul, had gone to Kuhdaman to recruit and mobilize new forces. When Pordel, Saqqao's commander-in-chief-who was based in Lugar-became aware of the Paktia force passing through Lugar and reaching Kabul, he led his five battalions from Lugar to Paghman and then marched from Khairkhana Pass toward Kabul to break the siege of the Arg. However, the Paktia force intercepted it on Khairkhana Pass, where a bullet killed him and his army was defeated.

On October 10, the Arg came under heavy shelling by Mohammad Yaqub, an artillery officer and a supporter of Amanollah, while Saqqao and his friends were strongly defending the Arg.

On October 11, the shelling continued and the Arg wall cracked. As a result, the Arg depot caught fire, with columns of smoke and fire rising in the air. By the evening, the invaders managed to reach the Arg sentry posts, but Saqqao and his friends, breaking the siege, had escaped out in the dark from the northern entrance.

First, he went to Kuhdaman and then to Kuhestan, while Seyyid Hosayn, the war minister, with his force, had arrived from Qataghan. While Seyyid Hosayn,

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with the majority of the group, supported the recruitment and deployment of new forces to attack Kabul, others-such as Khaja Babu Khan, Malek Mir Alam Khan, etc-who had some experience in politics, were not advocating a confrontation.

Immediately Kabul and Charikar held direct and indirect talks. Within a week, both sides reached an agreement by which Saqqao agreed to surrender on the condition that Nadir pledge in writing on a margin of the Quran immunity for him and his friends. Of course, Nadir apparently accepted the pledge; and to reassure Saqqao, he sent Shah Mahmud to Charikar on October 17. With words and tricks, he easily silenced and tamed this illiterate man of adventure and speedily brought him to Kabul on October 23.

Nadir Khan, the new king, was still residing in the house of Fateh M. Amin al-Asas near the Kabul River. The Arg Palace, damaged by the shelling, remained in ruin. The king was sitting on the floor in a rectangular room. A number of officials and common people were coming in and going out. At this time, a number of vehicles arrived and stopped on the backside of the building. Subsequently, Saqqao and his companions came out of the parked vehicles. They were all wearing local clothes. Habibollah had thrown on his shoulder a coarse military blanket, which was covering his shirt, coat, and trousers. He wore a turban. The moment they entered the courtyard and faced a large number of armed guards from Paktia, they knew they were no longer free.

Nadir Shah called for Habibollah. Without any change in mood, Habibollah entered the room and greeted the king. Everybody in the room remained silent. The king raised his head, looked at Habibollah, pointed to the left, asking him in an apparently mild tone to sit down. A spot was vacant for him in the middle of the row. He sat down and a deep silence filled the room. The king, wearing an overcoat over his suit, with a turban around his head, was sitting alone at the head of the assembly.

After a brief silence, from behind his glasses, the king fixed his cold and determined eyes on Habibollah again, asking him calmly:

"Well, Habibollah Khan, what did you mean by all this bloodshed and destruction?"

Habibollah, who had now felt that Nadir's manner of receiving him and questioning him was not matching his pledge, replied:

"When I was in power, I did what I thought was good for Afghanistan. Now that you have become ruler of Afghanistan, do whatever you think is good for it."

The king said, "Okay, now you rest for a few days. Then we will see again."

The talk ended and Habibollah left the room. The guards drove him and his friends to the prison inside the Arg. They lived ten more days in this "guesthouse."

On November 2, late in the afternoon, the prisoners were led out of the prison through the Arg north entrance to the north tower. They stood under the tower facing the moat. A firing squad was ready for them. After a few seconds, the

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sound of gunshots echoed in the air. The bloody bodies of Habibollah and his brother, Hamidollah, the supreme commander; Seyyid Hosayn, the minister of war; Sherjan Khan, the court minister; Mohammad Sadiq, the Paktia front commander; Malek Mohsen, the governor of Kabul; Abdol Ghani Kuhdamani Qala Beggi, M. Mahfuz Hindi, the war deputy minister-all of them fell to the ground. The following day, their dead bodies dangled from hanging poles in the Chaman Hozuri Park in Kabul.

In this manner, the tragic drama of Saqqao ended, with the falling of a black curtain on the scene of the Afghan society. It lasted from December 11, 1928 to October 1929. The uprising planned to undermine the Amanollah regime cost the blood of several thousand youths and the destruction of centers of change and progress. For many years, the nation paid dearly for these material and spiritual losses.

## **Chapter II**

### **Regression, Suppression, and Popular Campaigns (Nadir Shah's Rule — Oct. 16, 1929 – Nov. 1933)**

#### **1- Political Atmosphere**

During the chaos of the Saqqao interregnum, domestic and foreign trade, with agriculture and craftsmanship, went into decline. The country's major roads were subjected to military traffics and the larger cities were engaged in defensive or offensive activities, the burden of which lay on the shoulder of the young generation, whose native occupations were farming and growing orchards, with husbandry and cottage industry. All institutions of law, public welfare – such as education, health, commerce, the Parliament, and industry – had become inactive, with the honor and prestige of the state in foreign policy and internal administration undermined.

The Saqqao military and rebel government did not hesitate to lavish money and arms on bandits, adventurous and feudal elements to win their support. These groups did not pay taxes. Thus, the custom taxes plummeted – and in some places reached zero-because trade had collapsed. On the other hand, expenses for the military operations had increased, bankrupting the state treasury. Then the rebel government decided to collect the exempted and unpaid taxes, while at the same time some private assets were being robbed or confiscated. The government had put the people under enormous pressure. The legislative, legal, and administrative institutions had stopped functioning in all of the cities and provinces in the country. Even the old traditional rules of transactions had disappeared. Every officer and governor of the Saqqao regime was his own dictator and followed his own rule. Verbally or in written words, they imposed their own taxes, passed their own decrees on judicial matters-on punishment and retribution-and carried them out by soldiers. There was no court, no trial, no consultation or counsel. Everywhere voices of complaints came from men and women, with landlords and clerics becoming increasingly apprehensive, and the public, verbally and actively, rose against the government.

Under this condition, which was conducive to eliminating the rebel government and replacing it by a wise and desirable government, the Afghan people were in need of an intra-ethnic leadership body, party leadership or popular figures. The people had lost those famous and popular personalities, who could have rallied around them various ethnic groups. King Amanollah, Sardar Enayetollah, Gholam

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Nabi Charkhi, and Sardar M. Amin had left the country. The Saqqao government had executed Sardar Hayatollah and Governor Ali Ahmad, while Mohammad Walikhan and others were under surveillance. In the absence of a national political leadership, Sepah Salar Nadir, who had already raised the war flag against Saqqao, appeared on the scene through reactionary and imperialistic forces.



## **2- Nadir Shah and How He Became King**

During the Second Afghan-British War (1878-1880), when Amir Mohammad Yaqub left the Afghan national front and signed the Gandomak Treaty, the British government confronted an uprising by the Afghan people. Then the British government sent the surrendered Amir Yaqub to India in December 1879. Subsequently, it also sent Sardar Yahya (son of Sardar Sultan Mohammad Talayi), father-in-law of Yaqub, from Kabul to Dera Dun in India.

The Yahya family lived in Dera Dun for 23 years (1879-1901). Since the family members in India did not have any assets to live on, they had to depend on a nominal allowance paid by the British government. They did not have any capital to invest, nor did they have any expertise in any field.

After Sardar Yahya, his elder sons, Sardar M. Yusof and Sardar M. Asef, became heads of the family and each had several children. Nadir, born in 1883 in Dera Dun, was son of Yusof. He had five brothers: Mohammad Aziz, Mohammad Hashem, Shah Wali, Shah Mahmud, and Mohammad Ali. During the last year of his reign, Amir Abdur Rahman allowed the family to return to Afghanistan from exile. Nadir was 18 years old. With his brothers and cousins, Nadir had received a private education in India, with some knowledge of Urdu and English. Undoubtedly, they were familiar with the Indian and English culture from childhood and had been under the influence of the British imperial administration. The influence and sentiment that a person receives in time of his youth has a lasting influence on him.

When they came to Afghanistan, they found it difficult to adapt to the new environment, which was different from India. Therefore, the youths, feeling alienated in the new society, recoiled to their family fold. Away from the Afghan society, they remained within the royal palace, learning its manners to the extent that they became royalty models for the others in the palace.

They attracted the attention of the new king (Amir Habibollah), who in 1902 married a sister of Nadir. The marriage added credit to the family. While they had become famous in the royal clique, they were still unknown to the nation. Amir Habibollah gradually promoted them not only in the court but also in the Afghan army by giving them high ranks. Their fathers (M. Asef and M. Yusof) were acting as special companions (mosahibin) for the king. Nadir and his brother, Mohammad Ali-general and brigadier general – were acting as the king's personal guards. The Amir appointed Nadir's other brothers-Mohammad Aziz, Shah Wali, Shah Mahmud-respectively as Shah Aqhasi, Rakab Bashi, and head of the royal cavalry.

In addition, Nadir's cousins-Mohammad Soleyman and Ahmad Shah – became heads of the infantry princes. Later another cousin (Ahmad Ali) received a royal rank, and his brother Hashem headed the royal services.

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In this way, they gradually occupied the Afghan court. While the influence and royal position of the family had gained some ritualistic momentum in Kabul, it had not affected the people. Later an incident took place or created by which Nadir became more widely known beyond the royal court in Kabul. In 1912-1913, the people of Paktia rose against the government policy, which had forced them to pay for the provisions of the army. The king was in a state of panic. To win the favor of the king, General Nadir volunteered to put down the rebellion. Of course, the general quickly extinguished the fire of this great uprising and gained the position of Nayeb Salar or deputy commander. However, this was the first negative fame he gained for himself among the people.

Furthermore, at the end of Amir Habibollah's reign, Hashem Khan became commander of the army in Herat and Mohammad Soleyman, Nadir's cousin, became governor of the same province. Soon the people in western Afghanistan recognized them, especially Nadir who was now Sepah Salar (commander-in-chief) of the armed forces. Although in important military matters, he was subordinate to Sardar Enayetollah, the court chamberlain. Nevertheless, members of the family, whatever their positions, with cleverness coupled with aristocracy, tried to win the favor of influential people. Among them, two stood out: Nadir and Hashem, the first being commander-in-chief and the second his deputy.

Nadir was cunning, cold-blooded, and resourceful, whereas Hashem was hot-tempered and violent. Nadir, unlike Hashem, was patient and flexible and at the same time ruthless. Their joint actions resembled the two faces of a coin in Afghan society.

All members of the family were committed to a unilateral foreign policy of refraining from challenging the British influence because they knew very well the roots of the British magical, infiltrating and dangerous policy. In domestic policy, they did not go beyond the rigid conservatism.

### **Nadir in the Court Party**

The strongest incident that affected the future destiny of the family was the emergence of a progressive political party, which Amanollah had secretly established. Nadir joined it for a particular reason. Why did such a trend come from within the monarchy? The answer can be found in the social, economic, political, and administrative conditions of the time.

The political pressure of the dictatorial government, particularly as its foreign policy was under the British influence, was hurting the people, who opposed despotism and wanted the country to be independent of foreign dominance.

Amir Habibollah, as an absolute ruler, having entrusted the country to irresponsible elements, had immersed himself in an endless sea of luxury and

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concupiscence. Violating the Islamic law, he had gathered more than one hundred women in his harem, with dozens of illegitimate children.

### **Habibollah's Court**

Mirza M. Hosayn, the court accountant, first had to appropriate funds for the harem and the court expenses before dealing with the country's needs. Nik M. Gardizi, the court chamberlain, had to serve the women of the harem rather than organize the court affairs. The director of Kabul education, Maulawi Abdol Rab Kandahari, had to find an Arabic title for every harem woman and to issue fatwas for the Amir's endless marriages.

Mercenary clerics concocted a cunningly twisted interpretation of the Islamic law. They ruled that owning women from the dar ul-herb (a domain converted by war to Islam) was free and indefinite. They argued that Nuristan-converted to Islam by Amir Abdur Rahman, father of the current king (Habibollah)-was a dar ul-herb (domain of war); therefore, the king could have as many women as he could from that region. Habibollah, however, exceeded even these rulings by bringing women from places unlike any phony dar ul-herb. He just kept on increasing the number of women by claiming others as his servants.

The women, being classified as servants, concubines, and harem ladies, were divided into groups of ten, each one headed by a male called a dahbashi, with each member having a rank, an allowance, and a special title-such as Sabahat al-Harem, Merjanat ul-Sorrai, and such other Arabic names. The clothes and hats they wore came from Europe; the games they played included jugglery and shooting arrows.

From Kabul Military Factory two goldsmiths (Abdol Qadir and Abdol Ghani) were sent to India to fully learn the art of designing better jewelry for the women of the harem. Among the new jewels was an almond-shaped golden strip, with a thin chain, which the women of the harem tied around their waists to cover their private parts when swimming.

Mirza Taj Mohammad, a Kabuli physician, was in charge of educating the harem women. Allah Juya, an Indian physician, was busy improving the king's virility and preventing pregnancy in some of the women. Gradually, excessiveness in sexuality began to affect the king's mind and eyesight. Later, he invented the so-called Shabi Seraj (the Seraj Night), that is, the Amir devoted his Wednesday nights to the women.

As a result, the king grew cranky, picking on the courtiers. He used offensive insults in response to minor mistakes by his courtiers. This set off a fire of spite and revenge in their hearts. One day he growled at Ali Ahmad, the court chamberlain, and cursed his father. Ali Ahmad could only say, "Amir Saheb tells the truth." The Amir once went to Istalef (north of Kabul) to entertain himself. When, his son, prince Mohammad Kabir, accompanied by Nadir, arrived late, the king ordered that

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both men be put on mules, with their coats worn inside out, and paraded by soldiers in the streets of Kabul. (Later, Kabir escaped from his father to India.)

In 1926 when I was in Paris, Hashem Khan, who was Afghan ambassador to Moscow and then prime minister, came to Paris. During the visit, he made this remark about the king: "One day I was in the company of the king who was walking on Kabul Riding Park. Suddenly something trivial infuriated him. He kept slapping my face until it swelled. My father and uncle (his special companions) also had to follow the king by beating me more severely and then apologizing to the king for my fault, which had caused pain to His Majesty's hands."

In 1930, I met Shoja al-Daula on the river beach. He was a former Afghan ambassador to London. I noticed a few small scars on his back and ribs when he was swimming. I asked him what had caused them. He said, "One day during a trip to Jalalabad, I was late in moving the royal coach. The king, who was very particular about punctuality, put me under severe lashes. What you see are scars of those lashes on my body." (Shoja al-Daula is the same person who was considered to have assassinated the king) Years after the death of the king, Sardar Gol M. Zakriya, a literary courtier of the king, told this episode with some sadness, "One day I arrived five minutes late at the Arg. The royal motorcade had come out of the Arg when I arrived. He saw me on the road, stopped his car, and asked me, "What time is it?" I told him I am only five minutes late." He ordered his men to grab my hands and beat me hard on the face. Then he let me return home with a bloody mouth."

On another occasion, when the king arrived at a banquet held in his honor in Kuhestan (north of Kabul), he scowled when he noticed that the stair leading to the banquet pavilion was slightly higher than the floor surface. Immediately Mirza M. Hosayn, the court chief accountant, a dignified and reticent individual, lay down at the king's feet, imploring him by saying: "I am guilty, I apologize to Your Majesty!" This happened when all of the courtiers were standing on the two sides, watching the scene. Of course, he inflicted on himself all this misery and dishonor to ward off the king's wrath and abuse. He, who had reached this high court position from a book keeping job, used to tell his friends: "My religion is the religion of the king!" - and he believed in what he said, for he had shed blood during King Abdur Rahman's bloody reign. However, he did not even kill a bird during the reign of Habibollah, who, unlike his father, was unwilling to shed blood.

Shortly before his death, the king held a female party at the palace. He invited wives of some dignitaries to participate in the festivity. Most of those who did not accept the invitation offered sickness excuses. Among the courtiers turning down the invitation was Mir Zaman al-Din. He wrote to the king: "I am myself a servant of the king, but my wife is nobody's servant and will not attend any official party."

Later, before leaving for Jalalabad for the winter, the king held a large official goodbye party at his special Greeting House in Kabul. In a speech addressed to the military and civil officials, he said, "Sometime before, wives of the courtiers were

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invited to accompany their husbands to another party. Mir Zamanadin, who is present here, in reply to the invitation, wrote to me that he was my servant, but not his wife. Does a king deserve such a response?"

Immediately he ordered that Mirza should be stripped of his uniform belt (At that time, civil officials had military ranks and wore military uniform). Then he was beaten and kicked out of the palace. The entourage remained silent with fury and resentment. When the chief justice, Sadaddin, became aware of the incident, he sent a letter to the king, criticizing his behavior.

Later the king announced that a woman, who under the excuse of sickness does not take part in such parties in the palace, has to have a letter signed by a physician, the local mayor, and a local mosque imam. This order by the king was like a declaration of war against the courtiers and major government officials because the Afghan people had already abandoned their centuries-old customs and beliefs about the sanctity of the monarchy and the absolute obedience to it, and the king no longer enjoyed in their minds the status of Amir ul-Mumenin (Commander of the Faithful).

Although the Afghan people had lived for centuries under feudal rules, and they were kept backward and isolated from the course of human evolution and progress, they had preserved their spiritual dignity and social nobility. Although the masses-farmers, shepherds, and craftsmen-were carrying the heavy burden of feeding the ruling classes (the monarchy, landowners, and social parasites), with the duty of defending the independence of the country-while still content with a jug of water and a piece of bread-they were still spiritually alive and strong. While preserving this spirit, Afghan soldiers, with a nominal pay, coarse clothes, and dried bread, were isolated for years from their families, without doctor and medicine, and pleasure in mud border posts, and they died without promotion, reward, and retirement. With great patience and generosity, they never complained about the bitterness of life because they felt sincerely that they were the protectors of the land and its independence.

So when the people, while suffering from wretched economic conditions, witnessed or heard about the undesirable behavior of the king, they turned away from him. The intellectual class, believing that it was representing the will and wishes of the people, set out to establish a secret party called the Secret National Group for the purpose of overthrowing the corrupt and suppressive regime. However, the king, with chains and cannons, was able to silence and destroy the movement in 1909. Of course, the intellectual class had to go underground to continue its activities. Henceforth, distribution of night letters became popular in the country. Finally in 1918, a dissident intellectual named Abdol Rahman Ludi attempted to assassinate the king, but he missed his target.

The king had not only lost the heart and mind of the public, he had also turned the court against him. Therefore, a secret circle from within the court

became active to end his abuses and reform the administration. Of course, nobody from the court could establish a party against him without having the support of some members of the royal family. Among the members, only two persons could spearhead such a party. They were Sardar Nasrollah, brother of the king, who was opposed to the king's foreign policy and his way of running the country, and Amanollah, his third son, who was a much more progressive and knowledgeable youth than any member of the family.

Nasrollah was in favor of a rigid medieval system, but Amanollah was able to take the initiative against his father by leading a group within the court and outside. A number of dubious individuals, such as Nadir Khan, infiltrated the group to promote their own agenda. In general, Amanollah and the group leadership intended to assassinate the king, secure the country's independence, and bring reform to its administration and society. Amanollah and the group leading members endorsed their pledge on the Quran to temporarily entrust the monarchy to Nasrollah.

The leading members were: Amanollah (head of the group), Mohammad Wali, Shoja Daula, Hazrat Shurbazaar (Fazl M. Mojadaddi also titled Shams al-Meshayekh, who had extensive spiritual influence in Paktia and Kabul), Nadir (commander-in-chief in Kabul), Mirza Zamanadin, Mohammad Yaqub, his brother (Mohammad Sami), Mohammad Ebrahim (Amanollah's head-servant), and Abdol Aziz. Of course, there were others outside the group, who, like Mahmud Tarzi and Mahmud Sami, had ties with Amanollah.

The group planned to kill the king in Jalalabad and replace him by Nasrollah, but Shams al-Meshayekh insisted that first he should be given a warning to reform himself and his rule. If he refused to do so, then it was legitimate to resort to arms against him, the sheik said. Members of the group considered such a warning to be dangerous; therefore, they decided to assassinate him. Since Amanollah could not ignore Shams al-Meshayekh's spiritual influence, he accepted the idea of first warning the king. In secret nightly meetings, the group members wrote warning letters to the king and dropped them in the streets of Kabul. Mulla Amir M. Wardaki, who was supposed to pretend outside the circle that he was illiterate and kept doing so until he died in 1968, wrote the night letters. He lived for about 100 hundred years. As a result of the meetings, Amanollah, with the help of Shams al-Meshayekh and his dedicated followers were able to persuade a number of important figures in Paktia to understand the gravity of the situation in the country, the good intentions of the group, and wait for new unfolding events.

One night during a meeting in the residence of the Shams al-Meshayekh, Amanollah mounted his horse and headed toward the western mountain of Balahesar. Nadir had already arrived there. The two men held a secret talk on the mountain peak called Kasa-e Burj, The subject of the talk was never disclosed.

Shams al-Meshayekh was only told that they had signed their pledge on the Quran to remain faithful to the group and sincerely cooperate with each other.

Anyhow, some time later in 1919, the king was killed in Laghman and a new government was announced in Kabul. It was said that a sleeping drug was put in the oil that was used for cooking fish for the king, and Shoja Daula killed him in his bed later that night. A guard caught him when coming out of the king pavilion, but Nadir arrived on time and released him. (Details of the subject mentioned in the first volume of this book)

### **Nadir Khan in Amanollah's Regime**

After Amir Habibollah was killed in Laghman and Nasrollah was declared king, Nadir Khan was asked to come to Jalalabad to win the allegiance of the army to Nasrollah. In a speech, Nadir told the army that the king was dead. Then he said, "The king's brother in Laghman has claimed the monarchy, while his son in Kabul is sitting on the throne."

He asked the army, "Do you wish to choose a representative on behalf of the military to talk to the two sides and adopt an alternative beneficial to both the military and the nation?" For years, he had treated the military well, expecting to use its force for such a critical time to reach the throne.

The army, however, refused to choose him as its representative. A soldier named Gholam Rasul from Herat stepped ahead and asked Nadir in the name of the army: "As commander-in-chief accompanying the king, why did you not prevent the murder? Now that he is dead, we know what to do. We do not need a delegate." After Rasul, a Kandahari soldier named Mamak said loudly, "Commander-in-chief with all the military officers accompanying the king is responsible for the blood of the king." The army in one voice supported the words of these two soldiers. Nadir remained silent. This was the first time that Nadir felt he did not have the trust of the army despite all his patience and good behavior.

Later Enayetollah, as the minister of war, arrived from Laghman to take command of the army. He performed the royal salute ahead of the motorcade of Nasrollah, the new king. Nasrollah's reign did not last more than three days because the country was declaring its independence and Amanollah as the new monarch, who received the army's support throughout the country. Above all, the Nangarhar army, led by Gholam Rasul, pulled down the flag of Nasrollah. Later, Nasrollah was sent to Kabul.

The Nangarhar army took control of the local government, arrested Nadir with all members of his family, and sent them to Kabul under the surveillance of Major Gen. Shah Ali Reza. The Nangarhar army did not only arrest Nadir and his family members, it also insulted and abused them there and on the way to Kabul.

Nadir's brother and cousin, Hashem and Mohammad Soleyman, received the same type of treatment in Herat by the army led by Shahpur Tara-khel.

As Nadir and his family went to Kabul on foot, with hands in chain, the army chained and put on mules Hashem and Soleyman to go to Kabul. Of course, the abusive treatment of Nadir and Hashem by the military in Nangarhar and Herat had resulted from the mistrust and resentment they had created among the people. Eleven years later when they seized the monarchy, they showed reactions to the past abuses in their reign, which was full of hostility and bloodshed.

However, Amanollah, who abolished Nasrollah's reign and put him in prison, where he died, kept his old pledge with regard to Nadir, whereas the latter, having ignored all this goodwill, did everything he could to overthrow Amanollah. Amanollah also secretly transferred Nadir and his family from a private house, where they were imprisoned, to the northern tower of the Arg and treated them with respect. One night he even visited them in disguise.

The king apparently rewarded Gholam Rasul by appointing him governor of Panjsher, where later armed men disguised as bandits murdered him. Mamak, the other soldier who stood against Nadir, also disappeared. The rebellious battalions in Nangarhar were dismantled, with their members sent to other units and later discharged from the army. Nadir eliminated many of them after he seized the throne.

During the Third Afghan-British War, King Amanollah honored Nadir and built a monument in his honor after the victory. He also married his sisters to Nadir's brothers, Shah Wali and Shah Mahmud. The king appointed Nadir as minister of war and promoted his brothers to the ranks of general in the army. All this brought Nadir recognition and fame among the people throughout the country. Although Nadir abandoned his position in the Tel War and was about to retreat, he was stopped by Shams al-Meshayekh, who stood in front of his horse, shouting: "Where are you going?" Nadir replied, "Right away, a border agent arrived and said that a large British force is about to launch an attack." Shams al-Meshayekh said, "So much the better. Do we not wish martyrdom?" Nadir held ground, the war began, and the British were defeated. In another British attack in Tel, Nadir retreated and abandoned the defeated fort to the enemy. He was retreating when he received the King's declaration for truce between the two countries. This incident saved Nadir's fame.

Likewise, the mujahedin in Waziristan became resentful and suspicious of Shah Wali Khan. They removed him from his position as commander of the front and put him on a mule to go to his brother in Kabul. They fought the battle themselves. Shah Mahmud Khan, like his brother, was not trusted. The governor of Paktia, Sardar Atta Mohammad, through the army wanted to prevent Shah Mahmud from causing any disruption in leading the army against the enemy. Atta Mohammad had inherited his resistance against the British from his father,



Sharindel Khan, who was governor of the same province during the reign of King Abdur Rahman. Soon however, Nadir discharged him from his post and summoned him in Kabul. He even branded Atta Mohammad as being pro-British at the court of the trusting young king. In his memoir about the jihad in Jaji, Shah Mamud blames Atta Mohammad for being disinterested in the jihad, for trying to cause disruption and secretly provoking the army. (See special issue of *Majalla-e Erfan* on the 43rd Anniversary of Independence, Kabul)

In late 1921, after Kabul signed a treaty with the British government and the concern over the foreign policy was mitigated, the king sent several organizational bodies, each led by a minister, to the provinces of Qataghan, Badakhshan, Balkh, Herat, Kandahar, and Maimana. Nadir, who was minister of war, was in charge of Qataghan and Badakhshan; Mohammad Ebrahim was in charge of Mazar and Maimana; Shoja Daula, minister of general security, was in charge of Herat; Abdol Aziz was in charge of Kandahar. These ministers had little success in carrying out the new projects in the provinces except in Herat, where they had some success.

### **Nadir Discharged from Duty**

In his new post in Qataghan, Nadir established contacts with the famous Anwar Beg, who was fighting the Soviet forces in Central Asia. This caused tension in relations between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. In 1922 after a brief organization, Nadir returned to Kabul. Henceforth, the king's friendly relationship with Nadir turned strained. Finally, the government discharged him from the Ministry of War and other positions in 1924, while his brothers had lost their military posts a year before. Now it was said that Nadir was opposed to the king's reform programs and to his foreign policy of getting close to the Soviet Union and moving away from Britain. It was also said that Nadir had been involved in the 1923 uprising in Paktia, in which the British government was openly interfering.

The reason for Nadir's opposition to the king and his associates-such as M. Wali Khan, Mahmud Tarzi, and others-was explained in these terms: Nadir was in favor of a limited and slow change in government-a change that should not harm the interests and influence of landlords and parasitical classes of society and that the country should also get close to the British. It should be remembered that Nadir himself had ambition for the throne. Having been secretly active in failing the regime, he wanted to grab power and run the country regressively and follow a unilateral policy of favoring the British.

At any rate, the king ousted Nadir from running the Afghan frontier affairs, which played a significant role in the Afghan-British politics, and replaced him by his opponent, M. Wali Khan, before discharging him from the War Ministry. Subsequently, the king also gave the post of the War Ministry to Wali Khan, who

was only a politician. Later, however, the post of the frontier affairs was entrusted to Mahmud Yawer, who, being less competent, made the situation worse. (In reality, it was the chief of the frontiers, Haji M. Akbar Yusofi, the former Afghan general consul in Delhi, who was running the frontier affairs. He was the same person who became minister of commerce in the Nadir regime.)

In spite of his mistrust of Nadir and his family, the king kept his old pledges to Nadir. He did not resort to punishment or publicity against them. In 1924, he appointed Nadir as the Afghan envoy to Paris and Hashem as ambassador to Moscow, whereas Nadir and his brothers, after seizing the power, did not refrain from any type of revengeful action and publicity against Amanollah. They branded his revolutionary services as national treason and suppressed all of his true supporters.

The king's policy on the Nadir family did not change until 1926. At the end of the year, however, the government discharged Nadir and his brothers from their positions, except for Shah Mahmud, who remained in his position as deputy interior minister. Nadir left Paris for Nice, where he bought a house, with Hashem and Shah Wali joining there.

In 1927, the king visited Europe. Nadir and his brothers went to Naples for his reception, but they noticed that the king was still ignoring them. In 1928, the Saqqao rebellion started, and later the king moved his headquarters to Kandahar. The rebel government of Saqqao in a letter and by its representative Ahmad Shah (a cousin of Nadir) invited Nadir to return to Kabul and take part in the government against Amanollah. It was now obvious to all Afghans that Nadir and his family were against the king. Saqqao had also asked Shah Mahmud, who had led the Bibi Mahro front against him, to pay allegiance to him and he accepted. Later Shah Mahmud, with his cousin Ahmad Shah, signed the statement that charged the king with apostasy. Now Saqqao sent Shah Mahmud to Paktia to win the support of the people for his government.

### **Nadir During the Rebellion**

After the capture of Kabul by Saqqao and Amanollah's flight to Kandahar on January 1929, Nadir, Hashem and Shah Wali left Nice and arrived in Bombay on February 10. From Lahore he went to Peshawar, and then through Kuhat he headed toward Paktia. In the meantime, he sent Hashem to Nangarhar. Shah Mahmud left Jaji to receive Nadir in Parachinar. Then he arrived in Khost, where he began his activity. Before this, Amanollah in a letter had asked Nadir, who was still in France, to join the king in Kandahar via the Soviet Union. (Opponents of Amanollah had advised Nadir to officially enter Afghanistan through India). After receiving the letter, Nadir quickly entered Afghanistan through India. In the meantime, he wrote

to the king that he would obey the order, but because of his health excuses, he traveled through India.

Since the day Nadir arrived in Bombay until he passed through Lahore and Peshawar to Paktia and finally to Kabul, he gave this explanation to the Indian press and the Afghan people for his returning to Afghanistan: "I have no personal goal in returning to Afghanistan. I do not want the throne and the crown. I am a well-wishing third person. I regret the current situation of His Majesty Amanollah. I will work for his good and for the good of the society. My goal is to restore security and peace in Afghanistan. I will pay allegiance to anyone chosen by the nation to rule the country. I will not act against King Amanollah." (See *Nadir Afghan* (in Dari) by Koshkaki, printed in Kabul, 1931, pp. 349-351.) Also *Pashtuns in the Light of History* (in Pashtu) by Bahadorshah, printed in Peshawar, 1965.)

When patriotic Indians publicly asked Nadir to join the king in Kandahar, he responded: "Trust me and let me do whatever I think is useful and appropriate." Nevertheless, they insisted that he should assist the king. Nadir promised that he would support anyone the nation chose. At that time, the Indian newspapers published all of these interviews with Nadir to inform the Indian people, who were quite interested in King Amanollah. They recognized him as the first champion of independence in the East against British imperialism, and particularly they had repeatedly heard his call for the freedom and independence of India

Nadir sent from Bombay the same statements he made in India to Afghanistan, where they were distributed in different provinces. However, in the statements sent inside he had added that the people of Afghanistan had to resolve the issue of the rebellion and the internal fighting through understanding and negotiations, not by the sword.

However, when on October 16, 1929, he entered Kabul and stepped into the Arg Greeting Hall filled with people waiting to receive him, he seized the monarchy offered to him through a selected group of persons. Without hesitating to fulfill the pledges he had made to the nation, Nadir knelt praying and gave gratitude for the offer. He did this in contradiction to his previous oral and written commitments made to the nation that he would fight Saqqao only to restore security and peace to the country and would not seek the throne.

He had stressed, "Selecting a king is the duty of the Grand Council (Loy-e Jirga) of Afghan elders. And I would give my allegiance to such a king elected by the whole nation."

The Afghan intellectuals considered this explicit breach of the pledge by Nadir as an act of treason because they knew that the meeting of a handful individuals waiting for his reception does not make a council of all representatives of the people for selecting a monarch. That is, the voices of a bunch of political mercenaries-such as Ghokam M. Wardaki, who later became minister of commerce-was not the voices of millions of Afghans.

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Anyway, Nadir was proclaimed king on October 16, 1929 in Kabul. The following day he introduced his interim Cabinet-interim, because Hashem, who was to be prime minister, was still in Kandahar. On November 9, the new king delegated Shah Wali to the Kapisa province to announce temporarily amnesty for the brave people who were the center of the Saqqao rebellion. On November 14, Hashem formed his Cabinet and announced his government program. As a result, the century-old British political plan in Afghanistan, which was militarily unconquerable, was now achieved through political conquest. In the whole country, no other rule by any other person or family could so perfectly comply with the imperial policy of the British government.

Nadir's great grandfather, Sultan Mohammad Talayi, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had entered the service of the Sikh Panjab State. He sold Peshawar, which was part of Afghanistan, to the Sikh Panjab State.

Yahya, son of Talayi, in the second half of the century, pressured his son-in-law, King Yaqub to sign the Gandomak Treaty. He also handed over to the British government the provinces of Fushanj, Kurram, and Lundi Kutel. His sons, Asef and Yusof, sought the protection of British India and became its pensioners. Nadir and his brothers (sons of Yosef) were born in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in British India, where they were raised under the British rule. Early this century, the family, imposed with the British pressure on King Abdur Rahman, established itself in Afghanistan. Finally, by the blood of thousands of Afghans and the destruction of the country, the family seized the reign of the country. No country in Asia has experienced in twentieth century what the Afghan people have suffered over half a century at the hand of this family.

### **3- Public View of Nadir Shah's Regime**

Before Nadir came to power, the people noticed that Saqqao was dragging the country toward destruction and that Amanollah was unexpectedly losing ground and leaving the country. However, the people, particularly the intellectuals, could not trust Nadir after he defeated the rebel government.

On the eve that Nadir was proclaimed king, a group of young Afghan intellectuals (Afghan Youths) in Kabul, held a party meeting in the residence of this writer (Ghobar) in Derwaze Lahori to plan a strategy for their move against the new regime. The debate lasted until midnight.

Gholam Mohayedin Arti said, "The issue is not so simple as you think. A secret foreign hand has had a great role in determining the country's fate. The Amanollah regime, despite its goodwill and revolutionary character, was inexperienced and arrogant. The foreign hand by its internal agents misled the regime and dug its own grave by its own hands. Who were Ahmad Ali Ludin (mayor), Ali Ahmad (governor), Shir Ahmad (head of the State Council), Gol Ahmad (chief of intelligence), Mirza Yaqub Kabuli, Hosayn Afandi (director of Custom), Ali Mohammad (minister of commerce)-with dozens of Indians and even illiterate individuals, such as Shir Ahmad the merchant-who, like snakes in the grass, had infiltrated the government? How could the British government tolerate to see Afghanistan embark on a path of progress and have its own independent foreign policy? How could it see a powerful Afghanistan, which would be a dagger pointed toward British India? The British had tried for ten years to undermine the Amanollah regime and its programs. Britain has embarked on carrying out such negative programs, which you have hardly seen in the history of our country, after receiving assurances from Afghanistan. Therefore, cooperation with the new regime by any individual or group is participation in the crime."

This writer (Ghobar) said, "In Iran, in order to pave the ground for a replacement of the Qajar dynasty by Reza Khan, who was an unknown officer, first Zai a-Din Tabatabai, someone like Saqqao, was put on the stage to offend the Iranian influential circles and thus to prepare them for accepting a new regime. In this way, Reza Khan, despite his little education and lack of political experience, became a powerful and tyrannical king in Iran. This situation, in another form and scheme, is being carried out in Afghanistan. Therefore, refusing to cooperate with the regime is not enough because our impartiality turns us into a by-standing group. I suggest that the group should also vote for a campaign against the regime."

Taj Mohammad Paghmani said, "The Afghan people should not expect any good thing coming from the Nadir who I know so well. He has come for revenge and will try to eradicate any resistance to his will. It is the duty of every individual and group to continue, as much as possible, the national campaign against the imposed regime."

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Faiz Mohammad, manufacturer of gunpowder, said, "To know the character of the new rulers, it is enough to say that during the capture of Kabul, we saw two Indian British spies (Allah Nawaz and Shahji), who were walking shoulder by shoulder with Shah Wali and Shah Mamud. You should know that from now on the government of Afghanistan would be in the hand of the Indians. Campaign against foreign rule under any cover will be the first and last duty of the Afghan youths."

Abdol Rahman Ludi said, "Up to now what we have said amounts to a theory only, which must be experimented and put to action. We must therefore be patient and wait, observe and monitor the country's situation and administration. Until then, the group must wait and must not take part in the Cabinet posts, provincial governments, or other sensitive positions in the new government. (Mohammad Ismail sarcastically said this proverb: "Even though a traveler was not allowed into a village, he still wanted the villagers to tend his horse in the chief's barn. I do not think that the new government will give any sensitive posts to anyone other than its own family members and Indians.") We can determine our course of action and define our campaign after the announcement of the foreign and domestic policies by the government and after it begins to carry out its program."

Finally, the meeting by a majority of votes decided to pursue a strong clandestine campaign against the government. The group suspended the open campaign against the regime until the political boiling pot would settle down and the public would know the true nature of the ruling government. Then the group would determine the strategy of an open campaign with its ultimate goal in the country. Of course, the group did not need much time to know the real face of the government. The government itself was in a hurry to launch its program, specially against the intellectual class, which considered to be inexperienced and few in numbers.

Within the first year, the government inflicted its first blow on the Afghan Youth Group. Nadir summoned Abdol Rahman Ludi (mayor of Kabul) to the palace and ordered his guards to execute him by the Clock Tower. His bullet-ridden body was mounted on a donkey and sent to his wife in Shurbazaar. (At that time, Gholam Mohayedin Arti had fled to Turkey through the Soviet Union and I was in Berlin.) His body was anonymously buried in Shuhada-e Salihin Cemetery in Kabul. Then Taj M. Paghmani was taken to the Shirpur hill, tied to a cannon mouth, and blasted to pieces in the air. Another member of the group, Faiz Mohammad, manufacturer of gunpowder, who had lost one foot in fireworks on an anniversary of the Independence Day, was also blasted to pieces from the cannon mouth. A Berlin newspaper, with rage and repugnance, published the picture of the horrible scene. Before fired from the cannon, Faiz Mohammad cursed Nadir.

All of these punishments took place without any investigation, trial or evidence of charges. In a conspiracy hatched by the government against Abdol Rahman Ludi,

mayor of Kabul, Shir Ahmad, a Kabuli merchant, had hired a crier to round the streets in Kabul and to announce on behalf of the mayor that the Shamali people had revolted and reached near Kabul. He warned the people in Kabul to close their shops and prepare for their defense. Then the government falsely accused the mayor of having made the announcement to incite an uprising. Using the excuse, the government executed the mayor and confiscated his manuscripts. Then M. Gol Mohmand, minister of the interior, stood on the pulpit of Chub Farushi Mosque and made a speech, accusing the mayor of heresy and atheism. Showing a bottle to the public, he said, "This is a wine bottle taken out of the mayor's house."

The official *Islah* newspaper on July 25, 1930 wrote: "Abdol Rahman, the mayor, was convicted and executed because of the treason he had committed against the society's interests and because of his active involvement in the uprising of the bandits of Kalakan and Kuhdaman. God willing, the next issue will publish details of his treason."

But the public was never told the truth. The next issue published a false testimony, with the forged signatures of his friends, Faiz M. Naseri and Mirza M. Ismail, who, however, immediately denied signing such a statement. Then the newspaper reported that Mir Ali Ahmad, a writer of the Court Ministry—who was a friend of the mayor—was imprisoned on charges of drinking alcohol. Later, the regime punished several other members of the group, including Mirza Abdol Rahman and Sadaddin, who grew old under pressure and torture in prison. Mohammad Anwar Besmel was also imprisoned for years and Major Gen. Abdol Latif was expelled from the army. Mirza Gholam Jailani, who could not endure years of captivity, surrendered.

Mohayedid Arti was assassinated in Peshawar after he moved from Turkey to India. I had to suffer ten years of imprisonment and banishment, with the expulsion of my children from school and my relatives from government posts, after I returned to Kabul from Germany. The government would have executed all of the prisoners of Saraye Muti Prison, including my friends and I, if the bullet of Abdol Khaleq had not ended Nadir's life.

Other political circles in Kabul, like the Afghan Youth, had no faith in the new government. During Nadir's defeat in the battle of Shahmazar, Mohammad Wali, who was living in isolation, had told Professor Gholam Mohammad, an artist from Maimana, that Nadir would eventually capture Kabul, become king, and then the people would see Afghanistan infested with Indians."

Who was Shir Ahmad, the Merchant—the man who hatched the plot against Abdol Rahman Ludi? He was an illiterate man, but clever and comic, who had gained wealth without any capital. He had influence over some officials in the Amanollah regime. During the Saqqao revolt, he boarded a British plane to Peshawar. He returned to Kabul during the Nadir reign and became rich through some secret and open activities for the regime. His accomplices, who also became

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rich, included Abdol Rahim (confectionery), Mohammad Serwer (hotel owner), Mohammad Sharif Khan (rug seller), Mohammad Hosayn "Bache Kosa" (Son of the Beardless), and others. Among Shir Ahmad's closest friends was Hosayn Afandi, director of Kabul Custom, who had recently returned from the Near East. He also headed an official clique, which included such known figures as M. Naim Badakhshani (deputy commander-in-chief), Hafiz Abdol Ghafar Kabuli, Ali Ahmad, brother of Ahmad Ali Ludi, Faqir Jan Arti, etc.



#### **4- Character of the Nadir Shah Regime**

First, it should be noted that the Nadir Shah family government programs, affected by domestic events and reactions, as well as international changes, had to change its tactic and strategy. Altogether, the regime underwent the following stages during a period of about 25 years:

The first stage, starting from Nadir's accession to the throne in 1929 until his assassination in 1933, was the establishment of regression and tyranny and government by coercion and terror. The second stage, starting from 1933 to 1945 (end of World War II), perpetuated the same tyranny and absolutism with a change in tactic. The third stage, starting from 1946 to 1953, was the start of a change in strategy.

Nadir Shah, after proclaiming himself king, published his program in the following ten articles:

Article 1: The current government will carry out the country's affairs in accordance to the principles of the sacred religion of Islam and the Hanafi School. The National Council of the Justice Ministry is responsible for permanently enforcing the Islamic law (shariah) in the state affairs. The Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice Office, which will be run in an organized way, is essential to this government. In accordance to Islamic principles, citizens of Afghanistan, regardless of race and ethnicity are brothers and equal in their rights. According to the faith and shariah, the wearing of the veil shall be observed in Afghanistan.

Article II: Prohibition of drinking alcohol and punishment for drinking will be carried out according to the Islamic law. Selling alcohol openly or secretly is prohibited throughout Afghanistan. Making wine is prohibited. The house that makes wine or the shop that sells it will be confiscated and its perpetrators shall be punished if such actions are proven by a government investigation. If a government official is proven to be drinking, he will be punished and discharged from his position. Exceptions are foreign citizens.

Article III promises the re-organization of the army and establishment of a military school. Article IV is about continuation of relations with foreign countries-claiming to be very similar to the policy of the Amanollah regime.

Article V is about entrusting duties to experts. It talks about repairing telephones, telegraphs, posts, and streets.

Article VI deals with taxes and customs, as in the Amanollah regime.

Article VII talks about the hope of establishing trade ties with foreign countries, of exploiting mines and irrigating lands with modern means, and particularly of building a railroad.

Article VIII leaves the issue of education to the (future) National Assembly to decide.

Article VIII talks about forming the National Assembly, and

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Article X talks about appointing prime minister and forming Cabinet. (See Kabul Almanac, Issue # 1, 1932, pp. 2-4)

This written program, officially published, was reactionary in nature and full of charade and deception. However, the program that the government enforced was much more reactionary and suppressive, as Nadir gave this warning in an address to a general meeting in the Gol Khana Palace: "The current government, unlike the Amanollah regime, will not permit everyone to talk about politics."

The following day, the king, with a large number of his courtiers, took a walk outside the Arg Palace. Just as he approached the tomb of King Abdur Rahman, he stopped there to give his prayer to the soul of that ruthless king.

Turning to his entourage, he said, "Among all of the Afghan kings, he was the only one who knew the Afghan people and knew how to rule them." Undoubtedly, all members of the group felt that the king would follow a ruthless policy in dealing with the Afghan people. In fact, he kept his faith in King Abdur Rahman by following his path to the extent that he died for it.

In content, the Nadir Shah regime consisted of a feudal system that relied on aristocracy, oligarchy, and the mask of religion. The political spirit of this body was the same terror that Machiavel called the base of the philosophy of "the new dictatorship." This terrifying absolutism, which believed in the theory of the divine rights of the king or pretended to believe, did not abide by any principle or sanctity. It did not recognize any morality, not even a political morality.

In such a regime, obviously the personality of the ruler or rulers, who topped the pyramid of power, had a great impact on the society because there was no chain of responsibility to check unrestrained ambitions of the ruling clique. Thus, the ruling clique subjected the fate of the people to the flood of its whims and desires.

Members of the Hokomran Family (the Ruling Nadir Family) had been born, raised and educated in a foreign country. Of course, its environment and education had a great effect on their personalities. On the other hand, the love of homeland is a natural intimacy found among a people with common interests, customs and beliefs. The Nadir Shah family belonged to another environment; therefore, it substituted the love of homeland for the love of the family, which in its highest form does not exceed the love of tribe, while the love of homeland is built on the pillars of unity in national interests, as well as on individual education. This sentiment of family-worship, which is a primitive condition, cannot have any aim other than the family interests manifested as love of wealth or love of power. Self-adulation often results in isolation and hatred for the public. And this is an abnormal condition, which leaves no place for the expression of higher desires-such as wishing what is good for the others, truth for the society, and beauty for oneself-for it sees goodness, truth, and beauty in terms of its self-interests. For them even music is nothing more than a nonsensical hubbub and poetry or art is futile unless it earns money, as is knowledge and search for truth.

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The family-worship sentiment, practiced with hereditary habits and desires, or inborn talent, creates its own passion and unbalances other wishes. Then the sentiment for possession degenerates to greed, self-esteem changes to arrogance, and ambition changes to oppression and brutality. Excessive oppression escalates animosity and revenge in the oppressor against the oppressed. Therefore, the oppressor becomes more oppressive and cannot do justice. Committing acts of oppression becomes his habit-which, like instinct, does not require one's will-and eventually he will become incapable of doing goodness. In its abusive form, this type of family worship pits its perpetrator against society and humanity.

The Nadir Shah family, after thirty years of wishing and waiting, finally seized the reign of power in Afghanistan. In attaining this goal, it utilized, and protected itself by all possible means. Against the Afghan people's material and moral interests, the British government took utmost advantage of the position of the Nadir family. The policy of the new regime was to keep Afghanistan in medieval regression. Preventing expansion in education, suppressing the spirit of valor and national resistance against the domestic tyranny and the British influence, weakening the nation by creating among the people ethnic, religious, sectarian, tribal, and linguistic differences-these were the daily policy of the government. In carrying out this program, the policy depended on terrorizing the people by spying, arresting and torturing, and executing its opponents, by using deception, displaying false reforms, and pretending to be following the Islamic law. The spinal force for carrying out the program was an army recruited by the family and a number of bribed officers.

The policy missionary was a class of hired mullas and writers, who lied in their speeches on the pulpit and in the press, putting sugarcoated poison into the public mouth. The Afghan government had become a hereditary military government, without a penal law and recognizing any court and trial. Altogether, the country's administration was taking the form of a lowest colonial administration in the world. While Britain had colonized India, the Nadir family turned its own country into another colony. Nadir Shah soon felt that the Afghans in their social intellect knew that his government was dependent on the British policy-their old, irreconcilable enemy-and that he was wearing the badge of English-worship. Therefore, it was impossible for the new rulers to present their regime as a national government. The Nadir family also knew that the government, like the Shah Shuja government and the British army, could not survive a massive popular resistance. To prevent the threat, the new government embarked on a policy of fueling linguistic, religious, sectarian, ethnic, provincial differences among the people. On the other hand, to incite hatred and contention among the different provinces, the government pursued a discrimination policy by instigating the Pashtu speakers against the Dari and Tukic speakers in Kapisa, Perwan, Qataghan, and Balkh, thus causing killing and plunder. As in Paktia, the government used the Hazara and other Dari speaking groups against the Pashtu speakers.

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The Nadir Shah government also sensed that the archenemy of its dictatorial regime was education expansion and progress. Therefore, it took every step to destroy it. The economic problem was another important issue that drew the attention of the government. The new rulers knew-and they had experienced in India-that in a society ruling poverty-stricken masses is easier than ruling rich and prosperous classes. Therefore, the government kept the country in a state of poverty and destitution by monopolizing the economy and trade, by dictatorial management and exploiting the earnings of farmers and herdsmen. Even though it had the military power in its hand, it never stopped deceiving the devout Afghan people and never removed even for a moment the mask of religiosity from its face.

Of course, the new government policy complied with the wishes of the British government. From the moment they entered the Afghan soil, members of the Nadir family believed that nothing could be done without the will of the British government in the world from Asia to Africa and America, even in Europe. With this belief, Nadir Shah ordered his royal guard to put on a helmet similar to the one worn by the Royal British Guard-something that provoked the anger and hatred of the Afghan intellectuals. A Berlin newspaper mentioned this in 1930. However, Britain maintained its own interests by playing the game of putting the Nadir regime under constant threat.

## **5- Forming Government and Its Objectives**

Here the word “government” does not mean that a government existed in the real sense of the word at that time. In fact, within a period of 33 years-since Nadir sat on the throne until 1963-Afghanistan did not have a real government. Only the royal family ruled the country during this period. Nadir declared himself king on October 16, 1929. One month later, on November 15, his brother, Mohammad Hashem, formed his Cabinet, which lasted until 1946. The new government, undertaking the entire legislative, judicial, and executive powers, pursued the following lines:

First, the heads of the domestic and diplomatic offices should come from members of the royal family. Second, members of the Mohammadzai clan should occupy the administrative posts. Third, the government should have the trust of some special Indians in the vital affairs of the country. Fourth, big landlords should take part in the country's civil and military administration. Fifth, a limited number of affluent mullas should join the rank of the government administration. Technocrats should fill the remaining gap in the administration.

For instance, one brother of the king, Hashem, became prime minister and another one, Shah Mahmud, became defense minister, who also became prime minister later. His third brother, Shah Wali, was deputy of the king, and later he became Afghan ambassador to London and Paris. A cousin, Ahmad Shah, became court minister. His brother-in-law, Mohammad Akbar, an almost illiterate man, became Afghan ambassador to Rome. Another brother of the king, Mohammad Aziz, became ambassador to Moscow and later to Berlin. Two other cousins-Ahmad Ali and Ali Shah-the first became ambassador to Paris and London and later court minister and the second became commander of Kabul Military School and then governor of Kandahar and Paktia. His nephew, Asadollah at the age of 19 became commander of the Royal Guard; later he became minister and ambassador. Two sons of his brothers-Mohammad Naim and Mohammad Daud-also occupied high positions in the government. Naim at the age of 18 became Afghan ambassador to Rome. He was the youngest ambassador in the history of world diplomacy. In his subsequent posts, he became minister of education, minister of public work, first deputy prime minister. His brother, Mohammad Daud, held these posts: Nangarhar army commander, commander of Kandahar and Farah provinces, commander of the Kabul army corps, defense minister, minister of the interior, and finally prime minister of Afghanistan.

It should be remembered that only members of the royal family had the privilege to occupy for life high government posts. Only death and sometimes decrepitude could remove them from their positions. Hashem was prime minister for almost 17 years; Shah Mahmud was defense minister and prime minister for 23 years; Daud was military commander, minister and prime minister for 34 years, as

well as his brother. For 35 years, the brothers imposed on Afghanistan a despotic martial-law rule, with utmost brutality, terror, and barbarity. The absolute rule of the Nadir family, which was passed later on as a birthright to its children, lasted over a third of the century.

The official *Islah* newspaper (#91, Saratan 1310) under the title "Do Prominent Men Come from Rich Families or from Poor Families?" wrote: "...Statistics has shown this fact that the noble and the rich by birth and brain are more intelligent and stronger than the poor, as this has been proven by the life experiences of the two groups in real life. This should be one of those certainties that every human being has full belief in it because the best reason for the weakness of the poor is his powerlessness in overcoming poverty and destitution, whereas the progress of the rich to his position is the reason for his competence..." (Editor of the newspaper was a man called Maulawi M. Amin Khugyani, whom the government promoted to the rank of the deputy minister of justice). This article clearly demonstrates how the ruling class, which the government represented, put the culture at its own service.

However, it is worth noting that the history of human societies shows that great thinkers and men of talent, prominent inventors and artists, and liberators of mankind have come in greater numbers from the poor and middle classes.

Also from the Mohammadzai clan, with no more than 7,000-that is, less than one person for every 2,000 Afghans out of the 15 million population-these persons occupied the following government posts: Gholam Faruq Othman, governor of Nangarhar, governor of Herat, governor of Kandahar, and finally minister of the interior; Faiz M. Zakriya, minister of foreign affairs, ambassador to Turkey, and later minister of education; Mohammad Omar, governor of Kabul province; Mohammad Qassem, governor of Nangarhar and ambassador to Rome; Mohammad Atriq, minister of agriculture; Najibollah, minister of education and later ambassador to India and ambassador to North America; Abdol Razaq, governor of Maimana, governor of Farah, and finally companion and confidant of the king; Sardar Abdol Hosayn Aziz, ambassador to Rome, ambassador to Moscow, minister of education and minister of public work; Sultan Ahmad, ambassador to Turkey and ambassador to Moscow, and finally minister of foreign affairs; Gholam Ahmad Etamadi (and then Shir Ahmad), ambassador to Tehran; Abdol Rasul, Afghan general consul in Delhi; Mohammad Sediq, Afghan general consul to Meshhad; Yar Mohammad, general consul in Tashkent; Mohammad Yahya, Mohammad Osman, and Habibollah became respectively first deputy, second deputy, and third deputy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and later promoted to ambassadorial posts. Of course, the names of those clan members who had secondary ranks and reached higher positions are not listed here.

It should be known that the clan members, besides possessing enormous wealth and capital, gained so much power and privilege in Afghanistan that only the

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English in India could match them. Henceforth, most of them formed, economically and politically, the upper class of the Afghan society.

Dost M. Aimaq, a famous merchant from Herat, went to jail because he wanted to marry a daughter of Sardar M. Akbar of the Mohammadzai clan. Mohammad Saber, a musician, was beaten and imprisoned for years because he had married a daughter of Sardar Abdol Hamid. The government tried to make the word "Sardar" (Lord)-which was restricted to members of the royal family-produce the same effect on the Afghan public mind, as did the English cork hat on the Indian public mind. In the past, however, such intense discrimination and snobbery, mixed with arrogance and hatred, did not exist in the country. In the past, the Afghan people and members of the clan eagerly mingled and intermarried without any discrimination. This escalation of discrimination, which the government wrapped up all of the Mohamadzaïs in its own blanket-among whom there were many good and patriotic men, some poor and harmless-was not to the clan's future benefit, but future was not a concern of this government.

The newly arrived Nadir family, feeling estranged and alone in the Afghan society, had to form its own party and gain more power. At first, it sought the protection of chiefs in Paktia. Later it resorted to the title and fame of the Durani tribe. Finally, it fueled the ethnic differences among the Pashtu, Dari, and Turkic speakers in the country, without heeding the danger of driving the country toward ruin and fragmentation.

### **Certain Indian Elements in the Government**

**(A group of particular Indians associated with the British government in India)**

Since the end of Amir Shir Ali's reign, for the first time an Indian interpreter, Allah Nawaz Multani, became court minister in Afghanistan. Later he became assistant to King Nadir, minister of public work, and then Afghan ambassador to Germany. He married a woman from the royal family, and so did his son. Whenever he returned from a tour of Europe, high-ranking military and civil officials held a reception party for him in the Delgosha palace. (Details of his background and his family are mentioned in the first volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History*)

The Afghan army and the public also saw for the first time an Indian coach driver named Qorban Hosayn Panjabi in military uniform on the political scene under a pseudonym (Shahji Seyyid Abdollah Khan Hamadani). (He had entered Kabul during King Amanollah's reign and worked as a driver for the Afghan and German Wagner Company and later inspector of Kabul Custom.) He wore the badges of deputy commander-in-chief, the second highest military rank in the country. This individual, who was also president of the only military factory in Kabul, the military depots in the country, and president of the Shoe Factory in

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Kabul, also became a great millionaire and businessman. He destroyed the Afghan military factory by reducing its workers from 4000 to 600.

Tribal chiefs and men of various professions frequented Shahji's house. Every night more than 50 persons sat at his dinner table, filled with hundreds of mangos, each of which cost five afghanis. He smoked five packets of cigarettes a day, always throwing away the half-burned butts. He was a man of versatility. He prayed and also liked gambling. He was an organizer of political and commercial affairs. In poker parties, he paid 20,00 afghanis to a youth from aristocracy, who had apparently ravished his heart. He made him sit next to him and derived great satisfaction from looking at him. Men and families of the rich and the famous in the capital and around the country tried to have connection with him. He became so powerful that the government had to appoint him head of Paktia Tanzimiya (Head of Tanzimiya had a higher military and civil position than a provincial governor – trans.)

At that time, a minister's salary was 1000 afghanis (Basic food items were inexpensive: A sir of flour cost three afghanis; a sir of meat cost seven afghanis; a sir of oil cost 21 afghanis; a sir of rice cost six afghanis; and a dollar was equivalent to 12 afghanis and a British sterling pound was equivalent to 45 afghanis and 150 rupees.) The monthly expenses for his kitchen reached 60,000 afghanis.

General Seyyid Hosayn, who had served under Nadir in putting down a rebellion in Nangarhar, was jailed in Dehmazang prison and later eliminated simply because once at a party he had derisively called Shahji by his real name (Qorban Hosayn the Coach Driver).

The status of this foreign-connected Indian rose to such an extent that the official *Islah* newspaper (# 34, Qaus 1309, p.5) wrote this under the title "Granting Medals": "In return for the good service and activity of the staffs of the Independence Celebration, His Esteemed Shahji Saheb, president of the military factories, has granted a medal of service for every member of the group." The announcement by the official newspaper showed that Shahji Saheb could sometimes perform certain duties of the king because granting medals was a special privilege of heads of states in Afghanistan.

Henceforth, the houses of Shahji and Allah Nawaz became the power center of the Indians in Afghanistan. Every Indian in Afghanistan, more than an Afghan minister, had a much more influential, secure, and prosperous life. For example, Dr. Nur Mohammad and Dr. Quraishi, more than any minister, enjoyed much more authority from the prime minister and the defense minister. And in destroying or changing the Afghan educational programs, the Indian Maulawi Jamaladdin exercised more authority than the minister of education, Ali Mohammad. In his house banquets, the minister put dishes before Jamaladdin and other Indian teachers. When the government sent from all over the country only 19 students to study abroad, several of them-such as Homayun and Aurangzib-were Indians, who



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had not visited Afghanistan but were directly sent abroad to study on Afghan expenses. Zulfakar became advisor to the Afghan Embassy in London, first advisor to the prime minister, first deputy of the Ministry of Commerce, and finally plenipotentiary minister to Japan. There was no office without an Indian under the titles of a translator, a teacher, a physician, etc. In the internal affairs of the country, the role of the Indians, who pretended to be a more caring mother for the country, reached the point that at the Mazar-e Sharif hospital an Indian physician, Dr. Abdol Majid, volunteered to work freely. (*Islah*, issue # 42, Thaur 1309)

Of course, the Indianized Afghans, unlike the original Indians, had a second-class position, such as Ahmad Ali Durani, president of Afghan Literary Association or Mohammad Yusof, president of veterinary, and others. Nevertheless, the government had more trust in them than in the Afghan people.

This congenial atmosphere for the Indians encouraged many more guests to enter Afghanistan and enjoy warm welcome by the government. Among the newcomers were merchants, politicians, poets, mullas, and others. Shahji had no need for a visa to enter Afghanistan via Turkham. Indeed, he received warm service by the Afghan border post. In Kabul, the trade house of Hakim Jan and Rustem Ji took over the country's trade and brokerage. The Indian right-wing newsmen-such as Seyyid Habib, editor of *Siyasat*, and others-now and then visited Kabul and were warmly welcomed. Among the Arg special circles, Urdu (an Indian language) had become the court language. Even the book *Rejection of the False Rumors of the Ousted King* and Resolution No.5 of Afghanistan's Loye Jirga in 1309 AH were published by the government press in both Dari and Urdu languages in 1310 AH.

Other Indians in the Afghan government had the same position that the British enjoyed in India. However, this privilege restricted to those Indians who had open or secret connection to the British government. The real representatives of the Indian people, that is, the Indian liberationists and revolutionaries, could not find a foothold in the realm of the Afghan government. If they entered Afghanistan, they would be hunted or imprisoned and expelled to the other side of the Durand line.

The Nadir Shah government made serious efforts to have the participation of a number of feudal landlords in his government by reviving and renewing the dead ranks and privileges of the feudal period. It granted the feudal ranks (civilian) of colonel, brigadier, general, and marshal to more than 20 important local landlords (See the first issue of *Kabul Salanameh* or Year Book, 1311, pp. 52-53). A number of them received provincial positions and some of them remained in their communities, keeping their ranks and enjoying government stipends.

In 1930, by the order of Nadir Shah, twice a month, the government sent "letters of health inquiry" to all important landlords and mullas throughout the country. The *Islah* newspaper (#69, Hamal 1310, P.5), wrote: "The numbers of these letters by the king during the first seventeen years of his reign reached 46,000 pieces. The king also ordered that the government should invite all landlords, clerics,

tribal chiefs, and other dignitaries of the country for fast-breaking dinners each evening in the month of Ramadan. Furthermore, in the same year the government decided to pay regular allowances to favored monasteries, mullas, and other sheiks. The king had also ordered that during the Eids (the two Islamic holidays) a turban and a robe of honor, with cash rewards, be granted to the mullas who had rebelled against King Amanollah and Saqqao. (See details in 1310's issues of *Islah*)

On December 1929, the government approved a statute for the establishment of an association for mullas in Kabul. Subsequently, an institution (Jamiat ul-Ulama) consisting of pro-regime mullas and clerics was established. Among the most famous members of the institution were Maulawi Behram Kandahari, Maulawi Ebrahim Kamawi, Maulawi Abdol Rab Andri, Maulawi Hafizollah, Qazi Abdol Karim, and others. They preached, sermonized, published articles, and issued religious rulings against the opposition. They said that absolute obedience to the ruling family was a command from God. The association held a religious discussion session every Wednesday at the presence of the king and took part in every state ceremony and meeting.

The king had also appointed (Abdol Shakur) as a court religious adviser, who sent consolation to the family of any mulla who died in Afghanistan. Among the most famous mullas in the Cabinet were Nur al-Meshayekh (Fazl Omar Mojadaddi), the minister of justice, and his deputy, Fazl Ahmad Mojadaddi from Herat. The government appointed a Herati judge named Mir Atta Mohammad as head of the Senate Council. A Herati mufti (Salahadin Saljuqi) became Afghan consul in India. Later, he became minister and ambassador. Mohammad Sadeq Mojadaddi became Afghan minister plenipotentiary to Egypt. A number of clerics from the sadats (Afghan Arabs who trace their lines to one of descendents of the Prophet-trans) of Konar-such as Seyyid Abdol Hamid Pacha, Seyyid Gholam Rasul Pacha, and others-were posted at local administrations and the Afghan consulate in India, and Maulawi Abdol Rahim Andri became governor of Qataghan and Badakhshan.

The government also put the official Kabul newspapers in the hands of Mulla M. Amin Khugyani and Mulla Borhanadin Koshkaki, who had been educated at Indian religious schools. A number of mulla journalists held the record for flattery, distortion, and they inculcated the poison of the cult of government worship into the minds of the youth. The government sent to provinces a number of mohtasebs (religious police) to enforce performance of religious obligations and to flog the transgressors. When Mulla Hafizollah died in 1930, Nadir Shah himself at the Delgosha Palace led his funeral service. Hafizollah had published many articles and delivered speeches under the name of religion. The government published in the *Islah* newspaper the news of the funeral with a great deal of fanfare. The following are a few examples of the rulings issued by the mullas:

With regard to popular uprising or resistance against the ruling regime (at this time, the people of Kalakan and Kuhdaman had risen against the government) the Jamiat ul-Ulama (Islamic Society) issued a detailed religious ruling, Article 5 of which stated: "In the Shariah, the punishment of agitators and rebels against the monarchy is equal to the punishment of infidels who are killed by the sword." (*Islah*, Issue #3, Asad 1309, p.2)

This is a summary of another ruling by Maulawi M. Serwer, which he published in *Islah*: "The people of Daudzai in Kalakan and Kuhdaman-oh God,-they have gone far away from Islam. How much longer can the government ignore them? It is incumbent upon Muslims to make utmost efforts to arrest them, for they are the enemies of God, the Prophet, and Muslims; and the government should earnestly enforce on them God's order. Peace to those who follow the guided path."

At any rate, the Afghan government, which had put on the mask of Shariah, established a number of religious schools in the capital and provinces, such as Herat Darol Ulum, Najam ul-Madares Huda, Mohammadia Madrasa in Kandahar, etc. The government also exempted all mullas from the military service.

During the Nadir Shah time, the Afghan intelligentsia was harassed and accused of apostasy. An article published in *Islah* wrote: "A sound government can change people's characters..." The government banned all female schools, institutions, and *Jarideh Zanan*-the only newspaper published by the Afghan women. It recalled the Afghan students from Turkey. It imposed on women the veil. It even banned the printing of any bareheaded Afghan in the press. When necessary, a government artist (Mr. Brishna) had to cover the naked head of a picture by drawing a cap around it. The government revived and promoted all other regressive and superstitious rituals.

### **The Principal Court Cabinet and the Minor Cabinet**

The *Anis* newspaper on the eve of Hashem Khan's return from India to Kabul to form his Cabinet wrote that his reception would be in coincidence with the anniversary of the return of Mahmud Tarzi from the Misori of India. The Afghan intellectuals immediately knew that this unnecessary reminder by *Anis* had a particular political point. Mahmud Tarzi was the Afghan people's true representative, who had traveled to British India to consolidate the complete political independence of Afghanistan, whereas Hashem was returning to Kabul to destroy that independence, for the British government never missed the chance to avenge itself politically and militarily, as well as in cultural terms. Therefore, this announcement (*Anis*) was a nemesis, just as erecting Menar-e Nejat (Salvation Monument) had the same vengeful meaning against Menar-e Estaqlal (Independence Monument).

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At any rate, Hashem Khan formed his Cabinet, comprising these figures: Shah Mamud (brother of Hashem), minister of war; Faiz M. Zakriya (relative of Hashem), minister of foreign affairs; M. Gol Khan Mohmand, minister of the interior; Mirza M. Ayub, minister of finance; Ali Mohammad, minister of education; Nur al-Meshayekh Mojadaddi, minister of justice (judicial branch was part of the executive branch); Mirza M. Yeftali, minister of commerce; M. Akbar Mohammadzai, independent director of health; Rahimollah, independent director of communications. However, it was a Cabinet by name because its members were not different from the private secretaries of the prime minister. No member could even resign from the Cabinet without the prime minister's permission. The king's brothers settled important issues of the country in the other Cabinet, the Arg Cabinet, and then they made the ministers to endorse the resolutions, placing the burden of historical responsibility on the shoulders of the mercenary ministers. Here is one small example:

On November 7, 1932, Nadir Shah killed Gholam Nabi Charkhi. The following day after this tragedy, *Islah* (#82), reporting the news, wrote: "This man was murderous, depraved, corrupt, a thief and smuggler." One day later, it wrote: "The king, after killing Gholam Nabi, explained the reason for his act at a Cabinet meeting of both the ministers and their deputies, the Senate and Assembly councils, and Jamiat ul-Ulama. The meeting approved it and presented a requisition, in which it wrote that Charkhi's treason was evident from the examined documents. The punishment meted out to him by His Majesty has caused a great deal of public thankfulness. We also thank sincerely His Majesty's fondness for the country." In other words, the Cabinet ratified the crimes that the monarchy had already committed and took historical responsibility for them.

On September 15, 1933, in a summary execution by the government a person named Mohammad Mehdi was among the dead. The victim was a close relative of the finance minister, Mohammad Ayub, who was later chastised and ousted because he took part in the funeral of his relative.

The king and his two brothers: the prime minister and the defense minister monopolized the so-called three branches of government. They were called Aqanim Salasah (the Trinity) for the same reason. Of course, in this sacred sanctuary a few government officials were trusted to be present—such as Allah Nawaz Multani, Shahji Abdollah Panjabi, Faiz M. Zakriya, and Ali M. Badakhshani. This honorary Cabinet was hereditary—just as the monarchy—with almost each minister for life and replaced after death by his beneficiary. For example, Abdollah Yeftali, replaced his father, Mirza Mohammad Yeftali and Mir Haider Hosayni replaced his father, Qazi Atta Mohammad.

The shape of the government policy was colonially oriented. If it ever embraced an individual, it would also foster his family for future services. Among these were some members of the Mohammadzai, the Ghaznawi Malekyar, the

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Wardaki Mahyar, the Lugari Popal, and a few other families. It practiced a different policy with regard to those families known for their national campaign. For instance, with the removal of one family member from the service, the government would crack down or banish from society his whole family and even his friends, as this was the fate of the families of Charkhi, M. Wali Badakhshani, Nazer M. Safar, Shoja ul-Daula Ghorbandi, and others.

The ruling Nadir family, even though it was a remnant of the eighteenth century aristocracy, promoted those ordinary people who were willing to spy for the government or those who had connection to an individual privy to the regime secrets-domestic individuals or those connected to foreign imperialism. Therefore, a new chameleon class of individuals came into being to suit the government purpose. For instance, suddenly an ordinary clerk would become Afghan ambassador to one of the most important countries (Mirza Nowroz Lugari became ambassador to Moscow) or a shoemaker apprentice would become service manager of the Palace (This particular individual was M. Alem Lalpuri, whose duty was to spy on those nationalist Indians who were secretly entering Afghanistan.). A simple apothecary would suddenly become a doctor or receive a high military rank (Zin al-Abedin). A mosque imam would become first deputy of the Senate (Hafiz Abdol Ghafar) or a half-literate clerk from Lugar would become minister plenipotentiary to Iraq (Mirza Abdol Rahman Popal) and then his family would be in the forefront of the country's affairs. There was no room for expertise and patriotism when the royal pages, cooks, attendants, or sons of the palace midwives would become governors, presidents, and officials.

The government also put on the stage visibly or invisibly a number of unknown and odd individuals who would gain fame and own great mansions within a few years. Since history relies on evidence, not deduction, and accessing evidence in this instance is difficult if not impossible, particularly in the closed Afghan society and in the boundless sphere of the dominance of the ruling power, it is not therefore possible to disclose names and explain who Gholam Jailani Sadeqi, president of transportation, or Abdol Rahim the Confectioner, or M. Ali Khan Lahori (later became professor of history) and dozens of others were and how they became rich and millionaires in Afghanistan.

With such a dismal atmosphere in Afghanistan, the government considered the nation as ignorant, traitor, and a stranger; therefore, the intellectual class had to act like a band of thieves caught red handed, always living under permanent pain and terror. The purpose of the government pressure, whose precise policy the colonial hands had masterminded, was to disfigure the Afghan nation into a defeated, subservient, and begging society-a corpse in the hand of the government body-washers-and finally prepare the nation for the fragmentation of the country or its surrender to colonialism.

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In enforcing this design, Nadir Shah and his brothers, the prime minister and the defense minister, had equal authority, and each one acted as an absolute king. In the capital and in the provinces, they banished, imprisoned, executed people without any investigation or trial, suppressed the masses, confiscated properties, and burned villages.

The Nadir Shah government from the start smeared its hand in the blood of the people. It tried to present itself to the people as the true heir of the tyrant King Abdur Rahman. The people, however, soon realized that the new government was by far more brutal than its predecessor. Abdur Rahman drank blood in the 19th century and Nadir Shah in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first ignored the external independence and the second the internal independence of the country. The first imposed his will with the sword and the second with the sword and conspiracy. What the first grabbed from the people remained in the country, but what the second grabbed from the people stored in foreign countries.

## **6- Terror in Afghanistan**

The Nadir Shah government from the start took a bloody path inappropriate for any monarchy to begin with. From the onset, the king's frenzy in shedding blood seemed vengeful to the people. When the king designated a place in the Balahezar ruin in Kabul and placed there the murderous cannons, the people openly said that he was doing this to avenge the blood of the British Cavagnari. It was in the same place that the British Embassy was fire attacked and 700 men were killed. When the government's prisons in the Arg, Kutwali, Dehmazang, and city houses used as prisons opened their mouths to swallow Afghan men and women, and when different kinds of tortures-such as beating, breaking fingers and toes of a prisoner, keeping a prisoner sleepless or hungry, and other types of verbal or physical abuses-began, the people became convinced that the Abdur Rahman reign had returned, with, of course, this obvious difference that the Nadir Shah family had come from India.

The government knew and heard what the people were saying, but it went on intensifying its malice, enmity, and belligerency to such a degree that any compromise and reconciliation with the nation was impossible. The government ordered a night curfew, which began by a cannon-sound everyday at 10:pm in the summer and 9:pm in the winter. During the curfew, the Kabul city was as silent as a cemetery. The intelligence, the police, and the local governors had the order to arrest suspicious persons. Members of the royal family and their henchmen could imprison a person by a single telephone call. I myself witnessed in Kabul prisons young men who had served in the houses of the nobility. Only a telephone call from an angry or complaining house lady could condemn her servant to imprisonment. Hungry and half-naked, they remained in prisons for months without any investigation or trial.

Prison officials, even those of the political prisons, were assigned or authorized to beat and abuse the prisoners. Even the Nazi would not have committed some of the criminal acts that a number of these officials committed against political and non-political prisoners in Afghan prisons. Notorious among them were Kabul Security Commandant Torah Baz; Abdol Wazirabadi (security official), Arg Prison Warden Sarajadin Gardizi; Abdol Qader Lugari (a policeman in Kandahar), M. Yusof Herati (policeman in Farah), Saraye Muti Prison warden Nathar Ahmad Lugari; Abdol Ghani Gardizi, the Arg chief of guards, and a few others in Afghanistan.

The government used coercion and deception to expel older high school students and replaced them by a new generation trained under Indian teachers. It established various spying offices under the supervision of Mirza M. Shah Nangarhari (suspected to have secret ties with offices outside the eastern border) in the Arg, the police, and the Ministry of the Interior. These offices throughout the country were spying on the people, particularly the youths.

Expulsion from schools and offices, banishment inside and outside the country, and confiscation of properties had become a routine practice by the government. The government had ordered that the people in Kabul and the suburbs could not carry weapons and firearms.

### **Nadir Shah and Mohammad Wali**

Early after his arrival in Kabul in the fall of 1929, Nadir Shah executed without any court trial General Pinen Beg, Mohammad Akbar, Amradin Khan, Abdol Latif Kuhati, M. Naim Kuhati, Issa Qala Safidi, Tazah Gol Khan Lugari, Sultan M. Moradkhani, Mohammad Hakim Chahardehiwal, Major Gen. Ahmad Shah, Dost Mohammad, Lieutenant Gen. Mohammad Khan Paghmani, and Major Gen. Seyyid M. Kandahari.

A number of others were imprisoned or exiled, among them were Aqa Seyyid Ahmad, Mir Ahmad Shah, Ahmad Jan Khan (and his son), Nik Mohammad, Abdol Rahim M. Aghai, Sherdel, Nurdal Lugari, and Abdol Rahim Piyrokhil. *Islah* reported the news (#8, Qaus 24, 1308) two months after Nadir sat on the throne. What shocked the public most was not only the question about the guilt or innocence of the victims but the sudden arrests and executions of individuals without any investigation and trial in an Islamic, civil, or military court.

In the wake of these killings, the government arrested M. Wali Khan. He was a man who had done great political service in consolidating the country's independence. The government imprisoned him in the winter of 1929. It also arrested Mamud Sami, a despised individual, and put both men on trial at the same time. The trial intended to present Wali Khan in the public eyes as a dubious person in association with Sami. The evidence presented to the court was a forged document that the government had obtained from a few Saqqaoi supporters, who under coercion had suggested that Wali Khan, along with some other officials of the Amanollah regime, had supported Saqqao. Nadir Shah arrested Wali Khan and handed him to the High Court because he was a major opponent, while many other officials of the previous regime were still free, such as Ahmad Ali Ludin.

The head of this artificial high court was Abdol Ahad Mahyar, with Ahmad Ali Khan Ludin acting as his agent. The prosecutor was Mulla Mir Gholam Nangarhari. Other important members of the court were Ali M. Badakhshani, minister of education and Mirza M. Hosayn Deftari, deputy finance minister. Abdol Ahad was the same person who betrayed Amanollah and caused his retreat in Ghazni. Ahmad Ali is the same person who supplied Saqqao with arms against Amanollah. Mulla Mir Gholam was an archenemy of King Amanollah. His hostile and fanatic articles against progress and modernization were published in the *Anis* newspaper. The opposition had always suspected Ali Mohammad and Mirza M. Hosayn to be



supportive of the colonial policy. Other witnesses against M. Wali Khan were former Saqqao officials and members of his band, such as Khaja Babu Kuhdamani, interior minister of Saqqao; Ataollah Sahebzadeh, foreign minister; Agha Seyyid Ahmad, minister of treasury; Seyyid Aqa, Kutwali commandant; Khaja Mir Alam, brother of the interior minister; Mirza Abdol Qayum, chief accountant; Mohammad Omar and Abdol Rahim Kuhdamani. Those from the new regime testifying against M. Wali Khan at the court were: Gol Ahmad Malekyar, deputy minister of justice, Amir M. Bahsudi, and Zin al-Abedin. Members of the High Court were 75 persons, with two from the ruling Cabinet, 23 persons from the artificial National Assembly, and 34 persons from provinces.

First, the investigation team-Hafizji Abdol Ghafar, Mirza M. Hosayn Deftari, and three other persons-had questioned Wali Khan in prison and obtained explicit and satisfactory responses from him. Then High Court held its first session on February 4, 1929. The preliminary investigation papers were read in the court in the absence of the defendant. On February 9, the court held its second session at the presence of Wali Khan in the Astor Palace hall. The government allowed some observers to enter the court. Three members of the political group of the Afghan Youths-Gholam Mohayedini Arti, Abdol Rahman Ludi (mayor of Kabul), and this writer, with Rajah Mohandar Pertab, an Indian nationalist-were among the observers of the court session.

Wali Khan entered the court and sat before the judge. As usual, he was calm and dignified. With grace and indifference, he listened to the investigation papers. Since in his written answers he had explicitly refuted the contradictory charges leveled against him, he was waiting to hear the verdict from the judge. The prosecutor presented the witnesses.

At first, A. Ali Ludin testified: "M. Wali Khan had disclosed to Saqqao that the king had not made a pledge; thus he made Saqqao and his brother, Seyyid Hosayn, suspicious and rebel against the government." In other words, after Ahmad Ali on behalf of King Amanollah had pledged with Saqqao and guaranteed his safety, Wali Khan informed Saqqao that the pledge was not from the king and that he should not trust it. However, Wali Khan had explained in writing that on behalf of the king he had demanded the unconditional surrender of Saqqao. When Saqqao asked Wali Khan to sign under oath by writing on the Quran, the latter refused to make any such commitment to a bandit. After Ahmad Ali repeated his testimony, Wali Khan, with a derisive look, also repeated his previous answer. Then Ahmad Ali stood up, shouting: "By God, you are a traitor, a traitor!"

Wali Khan said to the judge: "As the court chairman responsible for keeping the court manners, you should not allow a man like Ahmad Ali Khan to rave in the court. I am not only prepared to defend my works as a representative of Amanollah Khan, but I also consider myself responsible for all of the acts and statements of His Majesty Amanollah." The judge, refusing to give him a chance, brought forward

other witnesses, who all offered fabricated testimonies in support of Wali Khan's connection with Saqqao.

It puzzled the observers how Saqqao's friends and servants, while sitting here calm and assured, were accusing another person of being a friend of their old friend and how the enemies of King Amanollah-such as Abdol Ahad, Ahmad Ali, and the Nadir Shah family-were now accusing and condemning another man of being an enemy of the former king.

At this moment, Gholam Mohayedini Arti stood up, saying loudly: "You have put under threat this honest man of Afghanistan. Why don't you let him have a defense lawyer under this invasion of charges? And..." He was still talking when he was being dragged out of the court by the order of the presiding judge. Directly he went to the Bazaar-e Shahi, gathered a crowd, and made a speech about Wali Khan's character and services, warning of a conspiracy against him. He is condemned because he was against regression and British imperialism, he said.

The next observer who criticized the court procedure was Rajaj Pentab. He said, "Although I am a foreign observer in this session, and have no right to speak here, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that Mohammad Wali Khan is a great Afghan and an international figure, who has done valuable service in introducing the independence of Afghanistan to foreign countries. In your behavior and judgment, you must be careful by taking into account his personality. Several telegraphs have arrived from liberationists (He meant Indian nationalists) in support of this personality."

The judge, who could not treat this foreign national the way he treated Arti, handled him calmly and warned him to heed his position as a foreign observer.

Then Abdol Rahman Ludi stood up and said, "Convicting a person like Mohammad Wali Khan on charges of supporting Saqqao by the testimony of the witnesses who were themselves friends and servants of Saqqao has made this trial more ridiculous than any other trial in the world. They asked a fox who its witness was; it wagged its tail, saying, "This is my witness."

Two guards dragged him out of the court when he had just begun his words. Then the judge announced the end of the trial and Wali Khan was taken back to the prison.

Then the court started the trial of Mahmud Sami. He was also accused of opposing King Amanollah and supporting Saqqao. After hearing the investigation papers and the charges against him, he denied all of the accusations. He said, "King Amanollah was my benefactor and I am filled to the bone with his benefaction. I had never betrayed him. This prosecutor (Pir M. Tarah Khili) is not honest in his testimony against me because he bears a grudge against me since he was my student at the Herbiya School (Military School)." The judge presented the witnesses and ended the session. Mahmud Sami was also sent to the prison.

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There was a repetition of the drama on February 11, 1929. The court convicted Sami of being a traitor. It summoned him to defend himself. Once again, he denied all of the charges against him. Then it summoned M. Wali Khan. He also denied all of the charges in writing. Subsequently, the judge and Mir Gholam, the prosecutor, presented false witnesses against him, convicting him of treason. The written verdict, which was also presented to the king, said, "Based on strong suspicion, we have convicted him of treason. Mohammad Wali Khan, who has committed treason against the Afghan society, state, and homeland, must be punished. Certainly the kind of punishment to be meted out shall be decided by His Majesty Mohammad Nadir Shah the Victor. Legally His Majesty has the choice to do whatever he deems necessary." (See the *Trial of the National Traitors, Mohammad Wali and Mahmud Sami*, Kabul Press, 1930.)

After receiving the verdict of the High Court on April 8, 1930, Nadir held in the Arg public reception building a large meeting of military and civil officials, with a number of known figures from the capital and its suburbs. Presiding over the meeting, in a speech he said, "I entrusted to the nation the trial of the social criminals. I established a high court for the trial of Mohammad Wali and Mahmud Sami. They were convicted of high treason before the nation. The decision for the punishment is given to the government. To secure the national sovereignty, these two traitors, who were charged, tried, and convicted by you-the nation-and before you their treason and crime were proven, are now turned over to you to decide the punishment."

At that time, Faiz Mohammad Zakriya, the foreign minister, stood up and read the High Court verdict in a few sentences, while hiding the investigation papers, which were 27 pages. The meeting, which was unaware of the investigation papers and the court proceedings, became suspicious. To put an end to the issue, Nadir Shah, addressing the meeting, said, "In accordance to the verdict, one punishment is imprisonment, another is execution. First, those who support the death penalty for Mamud Sami should rise." Most of the members rose in favor of the death penalty for Mahmud Sami because he was often viewed with suspicion. Then Nadir Shah said, "Those in favor of death penalty for Mohammad Wali should rise." The meeting, which was not given a third choice, chose the lesser punishment; therefore, most of the members did not rise from their seats. Then Nadir Shah hurriedly announced, "The meeting with a majority vote ask for the execution of Mahmud Sami; therefore, he must be executed. About Mohammad Wali, the majority votes for imprisonment; he will be imprisoned for eight years."

This was the first and last open trial of political prisoners during the Nadir Shah reign in Afghanistan. Since then, he never allowed any open trial. He handled it in his own way. Anyway, on that day, Mahmud Sami was carried on a coach to Siyah Sang, by the king's military aide, Seyyid Sharif Konari, where he was killed by a shower of bullets.

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Seyyid Sharif, tall and strongly build, was a graduate of Kabul Military School. His mother was from Chitral. Her cousin was the Chitrali wife of Allah Nawaz Multani. Seyyid Sharif and Allah Nawaz were related by this marriage. In the same way, they were related to Shahji because his wife was also from Multan. Seyyid Sharif was a strong enemy of the Amanollah regime and the Afghan youths. At times, he performed the role of the executioner for the regime. With his gun barrel, he beat to death Gholam Nabi Charkhi. He executed Mohammad Wali Khan and tortured Abdol Khaleq. He also published in Kabul a short article titled "A Military Scene," which was full of hollow propaganda in support of the Nadir Shah regime against the Amanollah government. However, this Konari youth did not live very long. He fell off his horse and his brain splattered under its hoofs.

Although Nadir Shah did not kill Wali Khan for a while and kept him in prison, in the summer of 1933 he hanged him along with a number of other political prisoners, including Gen. Gholam Jailani Charkhi, Gen. Shir Mohammad Charkhi, Faqir Ahmad and Mirza Mohammad Mahdi.

"Tell Nadir Khan to come and put the rope around my neck," Wali Khan told Seyyid Sharif when the latter ordered him to put the rope around his neck.

"I am going to put the rope around your neck," Seyyid Sharif told him in savage fury.

With the rope around his neck, Wali Khan said, "Tell Nadir Khan he may kill a thousand men like me, but a day will come when the Afghan people may know his true nature and hold him accountable for these crimes." Seyyid Sharif instantly pulled down the rope, depriving him of finishing his last word.

Mirza M. Mahdi Qazelbash was another victim. When he saw Wali Khan was the first on the line, he cried, "Hang me first, for I do not wish to see the death of such a man." His appeal was ignored. The next person was Faqir Ahmad, the forestry director. This cultivated and meticulous young man was a member of a political circle led by Mir Seyyid Qassem. Hashem insulted him when he was the first secretary at the Afghan Embassy in Moscow. His bullet missed Hashem and unfortunately killed an Afghan courier, who stood between the two men. Now Hashem was prime minister and Faqir Ahmad was facing death by hanging even though his name was not among those to be hanged with Wali Khan. Reviewing the list of those being executed, the prime minister said, "One name is missing." Then he added Faqir Ahmad to the list and endorsed the order. According to the Arg prisoners, just as his name was called, Faqir Ahmad, examined his clothes and turban, came out nonchalantly, with a grin on his face, and joined the death row. One after another, all five of them were hanged.

General Shir M. Charkhi received the rope cold-bloodedly. He did not say a word. He was known for his bravery. Gen. Gholam Jailani Charkhi shouted these words, "Our death doesn't matter. What matters is that our children should not be deprived of their education." Of course, this appeal to the enemy, who had no sense

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of gallantry, was not accepted, for his family was condemned to the same fate that ended the Wali Khan family.

The government confiscated all of Wali Khan's property. Since his children were small, it imprisoned his nephews-Mohammad Amin, Afghan ambassador to Berlin, and Mohammad Sa'id, a high school student. Eventually they died there. The government expelled his small children from school and banned them from getting an education. It put his family under surveillance in house on a mountainside in Kabul, and it imprisoned all children and women of the Charkhi family.

**The Nadir Shah Government and the People of Kapisa and Perwan**

Bent on crushing any opposition to his absolute rule or to the colonial English policy, Nadir Shah suppressed the opposition politically and physically. He always had an excuse for using force. His first political step was to create ethnic divisions, which led to hostility among the people. When he attacked Kabul, he allowed a number of tribal chiefs from Paktia to plunder the Arg and the houses that belonged to Saqqao's supporters in Kabul. After his capture of Kabul, they looted the Arg treasures and possessed or plundered many such houses.

During the Saqqao reign, a crime of this nature was not committed. Only those houses suspected to have arms were inspected and nothing was confiscated except arms. When Saqqao entered Kabul, only one of his soldiers broke into a shop. Saqqao's brother, Seyyid Hosayn, caught the culprit and nailed his ear to the store wall. Since then, nobody's property was plundered if not officially confiscated.

When Nadir captured Kabul, a number of tribal chiefs from Paktia possessed houses of pro-Saqqao officials. For example, when Sarbland Jaji entered Kabul, he possessed the house of Abdol Rahman Kuhestani, who was killed for supporting Saqqao in Hazarajat. When Sarbland Jaji received an order from the king to evacuate the house – the order was in response to a request by the heirs of Abdol Rahman for reclaiming their property – he wrote this note to the king: "You and I arrived in Kabul at the same time. Your Majesty possessed the Arg and I occupied Abdol Rahman's house. Therefore, whenever Your Majesty return the Arg to its owner, I will also return the house to its owner." This was his final reply and the house remained in his possession.

Although this tribal chief had no literacy, this did not prevent him from gaining the rank of deputy marshal from the king. By granting military ranks to a number of chiefs in Paktia and by exempting this province from military service under the flag, Nadir Shah pursued a divisive and discriminatory policy. Without a strong army at the time, he still depended on Paktia and granted its people special privileges.

After the capture of Kabul by Nadir Shah, Saqqao escaped. Later, however, some of his suspicious friends made him surrender, which led to his execution. In order to buy time and consolidate its power, the Nadir government announced amnesty and adopted an accommodating approach with the people of Kapisa and Perwan. The new government appointed the former secretary of Saqqao, Mirza M. Yusof, governor of the region, and the local people took a path of obedience too. However, all this tolerance by the government was obviously temporary. At the end of 1929, the government, having established itself, prepared a dangerous plan for an extensive crackdown on the people.

A Sikh by the name of Mengal Sing, priest of the Sikh temple in the Shurbazaar section of Kabul, had owned land and orchards in Kuhdaman. He had

mingled with the local people for many years. This young Sikh, clever, reticent, and mysterious, with an attractive face and a well-groomed beard, had made a deep impression on the local people. He made many friends among them and the bandits.

However, with the capture of Kabul by Saqqao, Mengal Sing stepped into the arena of politics. Saqqao and his comrades respected him and invited him to stand in the first row of the ministers when posing for pictures or eating with them in parties. He was no longer the same old devout Sikh. He became engaged to a woman, and he received an official entourage of cavalry and infantry to escort him to the house of his bride in Kalakan.

After the fall of the Saqqao government, Mengal Sing remained untouched. Now and then, he visited Kuhdaman, while still having the trust of his old friends. During the first year of the Nadir Shah reign, this mysterious person went to Jabal Saraj, where he quickly formed a new band of 300 rebels. The rebels even established their own Cabinet, which gave the government a strong excuse for launching a revengeful crackdown on the people of Kapisa and Perwan. But the Cabinet was not the whole excuse. Members of the band were also made to engage in clashes around them. When the local people became aware of this dangerous plot, they rose against the agitators, killing and wounding or capturing a number of them and causing many others to flee. Seizing the opportunity, the government launched its heaviest military attacks against the local people.

On this subject, the *Islah* newspaper (# 10, Jadi, 1308) wrote: "Up to now, 192 persons, with 6000 rifles, have been captured from Shamali. House search is still underway." The newspaper in its next issue wrote that 70 men from Kuhestan had been arrested, with seven heads of those killed brought to Kabul. The source (Hut 29 issue) reported that 300 persons were captured, a number of them were killed, dozens escaped, and fifty of them were executed in one day in Kabul. The heading of the last item ("Execution of Villains") appeared on the first page of the newspaper. By now the number of the Shamali people executed in Kabul without any investigation and trial had reached about 700.

Whether Mr. Mengal Sing was inspired by the central government or by a colonial government, we cannot say much unless this religious priest himself resolves the issue. Up to this writing, Mr. Mengal Sing is living a prosperous and secure life in Kabul and Shamali.

Under the name of re-organizing Kapisa and Perwan, the government, besides military deployments, also sent to the area a team, led by Mirza M. Yaqub, governor of Kabul. The team was under the command of Abdol Wakil Nuristani, a deputy marshal, who put a great deal of pressure on the people by collecting arms and money from them. The team, which proved by its action that the government's amnesty for people of Kapisa and Kuhdaman was nothing more than rhetoric, returned to Kabul in the winter.

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At the same time, the government had obtained from 125 former officials of the Saqqao government a statement, which was signed by Atta M. Kuhestani, former governor of Balkh, Mirbaba Saheb Charikari, former governor of Qataghan and Badakhshan province, Khaja Miralam, brother of former minister of the interior, and several others. In the statement, they had claimed that Wali Khan, Amanollah's deputy, had been involved in the Saqqao rebellion against the former king. Then the government arrested, tried, and finally executed him.

In the summer of 1930, the Kalakan people revolted against the regime's military pressure. About 600 of them attacked the local government center and the Sakhlu Camp in the area. The government dispatched to the area an army unit, led by Seyyid Abdollah Shahji and Deputy Marshal Abdol Wakil. In the fighting between the local people and the army forces, the deputy marshal was killed and Shahji managed to escape. Then the king built on Dehmazang Square a monument in honor of Abdol Wakil, as if he were a combat martyr against foreigners. Subsequently, Gen. Mohammad Ghous, while burning local forts and throwing prisoners off the towers along the way, arrived with a new force in Shamali.

In August 1830, M. Gol Khan Mohmand, the interior minister, became governor of the province, with full military power. Mercenary forces, particularly from Paktia, were pouring into the area. Shahji was engaged in recruiting, organizing, and dispatching forces to Shamali. The *Islah* newspaper (Asad Issues of 1309) wrote that the number of these forces from the tribes of Ahmadzai, Karokhil, Jaji, Mengal, Tutakhil, Waziri, and from the Wardak, Maidan, and Tagau areas was estimated at 25,000-armed men, not counting the government troops.

What was the mission of M. Gol Khan with this massive mercenary and military force in the Kapisa-Perwan province? What kinds of secret instructions were Allah Nawaz Hindustani, the king's advisor, and Faiz M. Zakriya, the foreign minister, passing to M. Gol Khan when constantly moving back and forth between Kabul and Qala-e Morad Beg, his military headquarters? The answer to this question is quite evident in the actions and behaviors of M. Gol Khan in this province.

The Kalakani and Daudzai people in Kuhdaman had started an uprising against the government in July 1930. On August 26, M. Gol Khan became governor of the province. Commanding a mercenary force of 25,000 men and a regular army division, supported by heavy guns, he launched such an offensive in the province that would not be legitimate even in a conquered foreign land. In this province, M. Gol Khan took on the character of a conquering marshal. He treated the local people with utmost arrogance and animosity. He commissioned his mercenary and military forces to plunder houses, destroy orchard walls, and burn forts, while he himself was engaged in tormenting, beating, and abusing both the rebels and those obeying the government. He demanded the blood of the rebels and the properties of those obeying the government. He insulted and beat the defiant. He even threatened



to summon their wives in a public gathering. When house search did not result in finding arms and money, his men threatened household women with piercing their breasts with needles.

With this approach, until the winter of 1930, M. Gol Khan collected and sent to Kabul from the Kapisa-Perwan people 2378 barrels of guns and 170 pistols, with 39384 pieces of gold and 149206 silver coins. (*Islah*, #58, Dalw) Of course, the above figures did not include the items that the invading forces had kept for themselves.

Worst of all, M. Gol Khan by his own order executed 15 persons, sent to Kabul 617 persons in chains, condemned to hard labor 3600 persons, who built the provincial roads, including the Panjsher-Khawak Kotal road. He made seven battalions from them and sent them outside the region. He also forced the local people to build military posts and deployed in the province a regular army division (*Islah*, # 61, Hut 1930). According to the same source, he burned and destroyed part of the Charikar city, which was the administrative and commercial center of the province. He also completely burned and destroyed Seraye Khaja, the center of Kuhdaman, and took as hostage 600 men from the local people and sent them to Kabul. In every part of the province, he forcefully settled a number of families from Paktia and gave them the best pieces of the lands that belonged to the local people, thus perpetuating animosity between the two provinces.

This was his approach during the peacetime. During the wartime, as reported by *Islah*, he did not only burn the houses of the insurgents, he also burned thriving villages. He burned four villages in Kalakan and pounded by cannonballs the local forts. The state-sponsored Indian newspapers-such as *Hemat*-expressed satisfaction over the burning of the four villages.

The *Islah* newspaper wrote that Malek Sultan M. had buried the body of a bandit by the name of Omarakhan, who was killed in the battle of the Charikar Khaja Sayyaran Mountain. The government, which considered the burial of an insurgent to be a crime, pursued Sultan M. and burned his house. The dead body was removed from the grave and brought before M. Gol Khan. The cult of cutting off heads of the dead insurgents and sending them to Kabul (as it was practiced during the Umayyad Caliphate) started from this time. M. Gol Khan pledged a prize of one thousand afghanis for anyone killing or capturing a fugitive from the province.

Altogether, M. Gol Khan's operations in Kuhdaman and Kuhestan produced their desired results: First, the brave people of this province, who had formed a great and glorious resistance center for defending the independence of the country in the nineteenth century history of the country against the British Empire, were suppressed. Second, the enemy accomplished its main goal of creating ethnic division and hostility among the Afghans-that is, the Kapisa-Perwan people blamed the mercenary forces from Paktia for all the aggression against them and bore against

them a deep resentment, as particularly M. Gol Khan was presenting himself wrongly as representative of the Pashtuns in Afghanistan. Third, the new government confronted the hostility of a large segment of the population, and it was isolated due to this policy. Therefore, it had to make more compromise with colonialism.

It should be admitted that great colonial powers never wish to see an honest, powerful, wise, and national government in a small independent country of their target. Such a government would work for the interests of its own people, not for the interests of a foreign country. How would a colonial power-such as the British-have permanent trust in a friendly government unless it keeps it weak and occupied within itself in order to exploit its fear and weakness for its own interests? For the same reason, the old and new colonialism suppress nationalist forces in the countries of the East.

At any rate, was M. Gol Khan aware that in the role he played and the province he devastated another force was using him or that he himself was an accomplice in the plan? In both cases, however, there is no crucial answer, except that we know he was an educated person, an orator and writer. At the same time, he was a fanatically tribal man, full of ethnic and linguistic discrimination. In domestic policy, he was reactionary, opposed to all revolutionary changes. Not having children of his own, he raised his brother as his child and later sent him to a Deoband school in India to become a colonialist mulla. He pretended to be a brave man, but he lacked the compassion and forgiveness of the brave. The brave stand against the aggressor but treat the weak with forgiveness and generosity. Men of this nature are timid and coward, biting, like a snake, anyone they face, with no feeling of pardon and mercy.

After accomplishing his mission in Kuhdaman-Kapisa province, M. Gol Khan returned to Kabul. As reported by the *Islah* newspaper, this was part of his petition to the king: "... Security and silence have come to all parts of Shamali, including the rebellious spots in Kuhdaman...The people of Shamali have received complete satisfaction and confidence from the government's peaceful operation, particularly from His Majesty, who is not only the king and just ruler of Afghanistan but also as the great compassionate father of all the people."

He was delivering this speech at a time when the government was executing hundreds of captives from Kuhdaman and Kapisa. Obviously, the official newspapers talked with care and restraint about the executions. For example, the *Islah* newspaper (Hut 1308) reported that 51 men from Shamali were put to death in one day in Kabul. The same source reported again (Saratan 1309) that 17 persons from Shamali were executed in Chaman-e Kabul. In the following month, it reported that a number of Shamali people were executed. In another report, it said "three bribe-takers, two drinkers, a number of traitors, and several villains from Shamali were executed upon the insistence of the local people." (*Islah*, Asad 2,

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1309, p1) In the following month, *Islah* reported that six persons and then four persons were executed (Sonbolah Issues, 6 & 7).

While all of this brutality against the Shamali people had produced public resentment, mercenary mullas rose to the defense of the government. They published religious sermons in an attempt to prove that the Shamali people, like infidels, deserved such punishment, and they tried to convince them that they should see all of this oppression as a consequence of their actions and thus from God, as the *Islah* newspaper (# 165, Hut 1, 1312) wrote: "In our religious texts, it is written that severity or softness of officials and rulers result from actions and behaviors of subordinates and subjects..." The use of the word "subject," which should not be a surprise, was brought by the new government, with some other despicable terms, two of which were the words "ra'ya" (subjects) and "baraya-e shahanah" (royal infallibility) in place of the words "merdom" (people) and "melat" (nation).

## **The Nadir Shah Government and the People of Northern Provinces**

The government, bent on creating division and hostility among the Afghan people, soon found an excuse to pit the north against the south. The adventures of an immigrant by the name of Ebrahim Beg Laqi ("Laqi" refers to a Turkmen tribe beyond the Oxus River) provided this excuse for the government. Ebrahim Beg was an ally of the famous Anwar Pasha, who was resisting the Soviet Union. He had immigrated to Afghanistan in 1920 after the fall of the Bokhara emirate. During the coronation of Nadir, Ebrahim Beg went to Qataghan to obtain for the new ruler the allegiance of the Turkmen people. In a mysterious way, he became active in Qataghan. Then he went to Maimana, where he met with Khalifa Qazel Ayaq, a Turkmen spiritual leader.

The talk between the two men in the northern frontier area-particularly the banditry of Ebrahim Beg, who was a famous "basmachi"-began to provoke the Soviet Union after June 1930 to such a degree that its troops, despite protests, crossed the Oxus River into Afghanistan to confront him. Tension between the two countries reached its climax. In the same year (November 14) that the Afghan general consul in Tashkent, Mir Hashem, was beaten to death with a hammer by his Russian driver on his way from Meshhad to Tashkent within 20 miles of the Soviet border.

Ebrahim Beg had 700 horsemen. He was a sturdy man of medium height, handsome and swarthy, with a heavy beard showing a few gray strings. He was reticent, but intractable and determined in his decision.

He carried the opposition banner against the Afghan government when it tried to put an end to his insurgency in order to prevent a misunderstanding with the Soviet Union. In Maimana, Ebrahim Beg forcefully released 20 Saqqao officials-including Mohammad Omar, Mohammad Serwer, Payنده Mohammad, and others, who were imprisoned after Nadir Shah became king. The local governor of Maimana, M. Omar Charkhi, with his colleagues, escaped to Mazar-e Sharif, not being able to resist Ebrahim Beg's forces.

The Balkh supreme governor, Mirza M. Yaqub, through Mirza M. Qassem Mazari, held talks with Khalifa Qazel Ayaq and managed to arrange a meeting between Ebrahim Beg and the Balkh supreme governor in Mazar-e Sharif city. On the new year's eve (March 21), Ebrahim Beg, escorted by 700 horsemen, arrived in Balkh. Brigadier Gen. Fatah Mohammad, Brigadier Gen. Mehrab Alikhan Hazara, Lieutenant Gen. Pir Mohammad, and Brigadier Gen. Atta M. Tukhi, who was hosting the reception, received him in the Takhta Pol area. The reception elevated the status of Ebrahim Beg.

Later in the afternoon of that day, Ebrahim Beg, escorted by 50 guards, moved toward Mazar-e Sharif. The government soldiers were riding behind him. The rest of his cavalry of 650 riders, commanded by Atam Beg, were guarding him from rear

and front and flanks. During the meeting, Ebrahim Beg did not say a word, except an exchange of a few words about the weather. He passed by Mazar-e Sharif city, heading east toward the garden of Brigadier Gen. Atta Mohammad, which was prepared for his lodging.

In the center of this great fruit garden was a platform surrounded by old plane trees, with a big canopy. There was a tent for Ebrahim Beg on one corner of the platform, with other tents erected around it. There was a kitchen built on one side, with a gate opening from another side. The garden was now full of the horsemen. During the prayer time, Atam Beg guarded Ebrahim Beg while the latter led the prayer.

At this time, Brigadier Gen. M. Kazem presented to Ebrahim Beg a message from the supreme governor, who had promised to meet him, the following day. Ebrahim Beg, thanking him, said, "Sometimes friends and brothers have their differences and misunderstandings, but these differences result in stronger ties."

Later under the light of gas lanterns, plates of food were placed before the guests. However, the moment they began eating, the roar of gunfire rose around them. Suddenly the screams of the Turkmen horsemen filled the garden, causing suspicion among the guests.

Atta Mohammad, facing Ebrahim Beg, said, "Tonight is Nowroz and the ceremony of raising the flag of Rouzah-e Sharif (the Shrine of Ali) is accompanied with the sound of gunfire. We would have taken part in the ceremony, had we not been tired."

Ebrahim Beg sarcastically said, "But we were not aware of this. Anyway, tomorrow we will watch this festivity." Soon he dismissed the government officers and closed the garden gate. Ebrahim Beg had already lost his trust in the government.

At dawn, when the people and the city garrison were still asleep, the Turkmen horsemen, who, like their Saljuq ancestors a thousand years ago, were all armed and unmarried, jumped their horses over the gate and the lower parts of the garden wall, running away like the wind.

Later the supreme governor heard his telephone ringing. He picked up the receiver. It was Ebrahim Beg calling from the Siyahgard Telephone House: "I cannot trust you and will not meet with you. So, Goodbye."

Mirza Yaqub regretted that such a good prey slipped away from near the trap. At any rate, once again Ebrahim Beg and his horsemen had a vast area for their adventures from Maimana to Mazar-e Sharif, while Qataghan remained his main base.

He continued his insurgency from 1929 to 1930, flying, like a bird, between the cage and the trap. Nevertheless, he did not surrender even though he was unable to directly confront the government. With his men, he rode into the towns and villages of Qataghan, demanding food and fodder from the local people and

suppressing any resistance to his wishes. When facing the pursuing government forces, he fought bravely and retreated quickly. Of course, the regular government forces could not encircle and arrest him.

Finally, in December 1930 the government put the defense minister, Shah Mahmud, in charge of a large delegation and massive force in the region to put an end to this problem. The forces, led by the defense minister, consisted of mercenary units from the tribal people of Paktia (Waziri, Massoudi, Jadrani and other tribes) and regular government troops. (By this time, the government had formed an army of 40,000 troops, with a small but effective air force, which later grew stronger and increased in number.) Shah Mahmud made Khanabad his main base, where he established an autocratic military establishment, considering the whole population of the province as his enemy. He created an atmosphere of unprecedented terror in the province, while the only rebels against the government were Ebrahim Beg and his small band of 700 fighters.

At any rate, within eight months (December 1930-July 1931), Shah Mahmud, as the defense minister and brother of the king, with no formal military training, created an establishment as formidable as the monarchy in the capital. This establishment, without any trial, filled the newly built prisons in Khanabad with hundreds of innocent and guilty people, including women. He built a torture house, filled with flogs, sticks, and other tormenting tools, and carried out summary executions. The local people had to pay for the expenses of mercenary and regular forces. The guards assaulted the imprisoned women in Saraye Jemshid Khan prison. Chains and shackles, legally banned by the Amanollah regime (only a murderer was chained by one foot), were now put on necks and feet of the prisoners. All of the people of the Qatghan province were being punished for the sins of the outlaw Ebrahim Beg.

Like a lightning in the dark, he dashed into a village, demanding food and fodder for his men and horses. After a short rest, he would move to another location. The unarmed villagers could not stop his intrusion, but Shah Mahmud considered this as an unpardonable sin, while even his mercenary and regular forces were not able to prevent such guerilla attacks.

The mercenary forces were skilled in fighting in mountains and valleys and in ambushes against fixed targets, not in guerilla warfare on a vast plain against a fast-moving enemy. The infantry and the cavalry of the regime could not surpass the sweeping Turkmen horsemen. Nevertheless, Shah Mahmud resorted to arresting, torturing, and killing the unarmed civilians to compensate for the weakness of his troops.

Finally, after several months of guerilla warfare, Ebrahim Beg realized that he could not confront the regime forces directly or obtain desirable results from the guerilla warfare, particularly as the number of his men was declining day by day. Therefore, he had to retreat from one position to another, as the circle of his

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movement was narrowing in the province. He went to Maimana to strengthen his forces, but the government had already turned Maimana into another trap for him.

For this reason, in the summer of 1930 he returned to the Qataghan border area. Eventually, in 1931 he crossed the Oxus River into the Soviet Union. After some time, the Tass news agency reported that the Soviet regime had eliminated the Ebrahim Beg band. The source mentioned that Ebrahim Beg, with his assistant, was arrested on June 22 and taken to Tashkent the following day. After a period of 14 months from June 1930 until July 1931, the insurgency of Ebrahim Beg ended. In Khanabad, Shah Mahmud held a victory celebration.

However, the problem was not so simple. The mutiny of Ebrahim Beg led to the suppression of the northern people, and it bred resentment and hostility between the northern and southern provinces divided by the Hindu Kosh range. Shah Mahmud carried out all of his destructive activities in the region by the Pashtun mercenary forces from Paktia under the name of Afghans and non-Afghans. He planted the most destructive seed of ethnic division and national disunity in the north and was later nurtured by Mohammad Gol Khan.

Shah Mahmud tortured those charged with supporting Ebrahim Beg. He placed female prisoners in Saraye Jemshid Khan prison under the custody of foreign guards, whom he did not prevent from raping and assaulting the prisoners. One day 31 prisoners were brought before him. While standing on his carpet-prayer to pray, he pointed by his finger that the prisoners should be shot immediately. Later Mirza M. Yusof, Shah Mahmud's special secretary, revealed that more than 700 persons were executed in Khanabad.

Shah Mahmud ordered a thousand Turkmen families, with their children, women, and old prisoners, to walk two manzels (one manzel is a one-day walk) a day without rest from Khanabad to Kabul. A Jedrani tribal mercenary unit rode behind them to prevent them from stopping on the way. Due to the heat and the long trip, the old prisoners could not walk more than one manzel the first day. In reply to a message from a courier that the prisoners could not travel more than one manzel, Shah Mahmud said: Traveling 20 miles a day was mandatory; therefore anyone who could not do so should be killed. The next day, the officer in charge, who told them about the order, continued the push. Before starting the second manzel, three sick and old men collapsed. The unit officer had to enforce Shah Mahmud's order. The mercenary shot the three men, releasing them from the suffering they could not bear.

Centuries before Shah Mahmud, Chengiz Khan, when marching into Samarkand, had ordered the native mercenaries, who were forced to kill their countrymen, to walk before the Mongol army and those lagging behind be killed. If there is a difference between the two orders, it is that the Mongol chief had issued such an order in the thirteenth century against a foreign vanquished people, whereas

Shah Mahmud revived the Mongol dead custom in the twentieth century against his own countrymen.

Finally, with great hardship, they reached Kabul and settled in Botkhak district. Major landowners, including Shah Mahmud, used them on their farmlands as slave laborers, where they gradually lost their identity. Out of all these tragic events, the *Islah* newspaper (#72, Sawr 1310) only wrote that some of them faced execution, some imprisonment in Khanabad, and a number of them were taken to Kabul.

Nadir Shah personally received the Jadrani mercenaries in the palace after they returned to Kabul. In order to encourage them to carry out similar missions in the future, he gave cash awards to each wounded member of the group, with free medical treatment. He granted allowances for the families of those killed in action and travel expenses and gifts for the others. Also after the return of Shah Mahmud to Kabul in July (or August) 1331, Nadir Shah granted an extra one-month allowance to all of the troops accompanying the defense minister. In addition, the government made new medals for certain troops and officers of the army "for suppressing the Qataghan rebels". The excuse for all this mayhem was the small band of Ebrahim Beg.

However, the fate of the north did not stop here. Early in 1932, the government appointed M.Gol Khan as the supreme governor of the northern provinces. Having fueled ethnic and linguistic discriminations among the Afghan people in Nangarhar, Kapisa, Perwan, and Kandahar, now he had the mission to carry out his inauspicious schemes in all of the provinces in the north. He planted the seeds of malice and vendetta in the minds of the people and put the country on the brink of ethnic eruption and division. Because of this discriminatory policy, the majority - minority problems and other ethnic conflicts were enflamed in the country, thus paving the ground for the influence and advantage of foreign colonial policies. Of course, the unpopular Nadir Shah government had chosen the slogan of "divide and rule" as its policy and as a means of its perpetuation.

Obviously, these divisive conflicts in the Afghanistan of the twentieth century had not originated from the character of the Afghan people. In the course of history, Afghans of various ethnic origins had jointly participated in their national destinies, as well as in their common grief and happiness, the most prominent example of which is evident in the defense of the country against foreign aggressions. Furthermore, all of the Afghan people, including the Pashtuns, have equally suffered from the burden of tyranny, poverty, disease, and ignorance.

The people of Paktia made barley flour taste bitter to economize its consumption. Even the women in Nangarhar walk hills and deserts without shoes for earning a loaf of bread. In the remote villages of Farah-where this writer lived for a year-not only men, women, children did not have payzar shoes, they had not even seen lanterns and sugar cubes. The people in Kandahar villages live in mud houses



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or sit on the ground. This is the real face of the lives of millions of Afghans, crushing under the ruling classes in the country. The government exacts taxes from them, traders demand commission fees, mullas ask for alms, and landowners get the sap of their lives. Yet, the defense and building of the country are on their shoulders, as well as laboring for landowners. Despite all this, their children cannot afford education, their patients cannot afford treatment, and those without work cannot find work.

Instead, the ruling class has entertainment in cities and restaurants, with its politicians drinking to the name and honor of this nation in international parties. The state corrupt bureaucracy, using them as servants of the ruling class, does not recognize them as equal subjects. These men, who see themselves as "lords" of the country, if dispossessed of the national assets they have stolen and driven outside the country, they would not be able to earn a bare living unless they washed dishes in a foreign restaurant.

For the sake of protecting one another over this rich and sumptuous feast, the sponging classes, without signing any treaty, obviously work and walk together in exploiting the great innocent masses of the country. The ruling nobility, which traces its line to idols, wear the mask of deception and demagoguery. Proudly they present themselves in mosques and to society as the all-knowing mind and the Messiah of the masses, but privately they do a hundred other things. In the same time they are landowners and merchants, and they consider certain so-called mullas as their Baptismal fathers. The great landholders, who, with the ruling power, are the inseparable partners in exploiting the people, consider social progress as being synonymous to their downfall, just as a number of regressive mullas think that the people's awakening will bankrupt their own market. Therefore, all of them collectively wish for the ignorance, weakness, and disunity of the people.

### **The Nadir Shah Government and People of Paktia**

Geographically and economically, the people of Paktia are poorer than the majority of the people in Afghanistan. Paktia has little farming, and the provincial trade is restricted to the nomadic and half-nomadic Soleyman Khil, Kharuti, and other tribes. The local trade is limited to timber, rope, and a special fiber used for making sacks carried on mules to Kabul. Most people eat barley as their main foodstuff. Their mud houses are bare, without any rug or floor cover. Instead of kerosene lamps or candles, they burn wood to light their houses.

Nevertheless, their valiant armed men have played an effective role in defending the country's independence. Nadir Shah knew all this by experience. Therefore, he made this province, with whose support he won the throne, the center of his activities. In order to have this force at his disposal against his enemies, Nadir Shah played the role that apparently attracted the people of Paktia. In fact, he cheated them. Nadir Shah exempted them from military service and granted their chiefs special privileges in the court and government offices. He appointed Shah Mahmud, the defense minister, as their tribal leader and authorized Shahji to settle their problems. He coaxed the wealthy and the influential men of the province by granting them cash and privileges.

However, the monarchy never wanted to make the slightest effort in developing education, awakening the people, building industry, and raising the standard of living in the province, which were considered by the government to be impeding the way it wanted to use the province.

Therefore, the regime kept the people in a state of poverty, destitution, and ignorance. To prevent them from becoming united, the regime also embroiled them in the fire of rivalry and tribal prejudice. For example, Shah Mahmud perpetuated the hostility between the Jaji and Mengal people until he died. The Jaji supported Nadir with food, shelter, arms, men, won the war for him, and finally the throne. Despite all this, the monarchy was not willing to see unity among the tribes.

A dispute over a piece of mountain land had caused the death of several hundred persons in a continued conflict between two tribes. Both sides were still in a state of war. The Mengal tribesmen demanded the blood of more than a hundred persons, while the Jaji tribesmen demanded the blood of about 200 persons. A number of Jaji elders appealed to Shah Mahmud to visit Paktia and settle the conflict in a grand council of tribal elders. The Jaji elders asked him to represent them in the council and promised him to pay in advance all of the council expenses. Although he verbally welcomed such a move, he never fulfilled his promise to end the tribal conflict because he viewed their unity against his government policy.

Goljan Khan, an honorary general and the elected Jaji representative for the Seventh National Assembly, who had hosted Nadir in his house during the Saqqao government, expressed regret and resentment over the ruling family's divisive policy.

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To put down the rebellion of the Darikhil tribesmen of Jadran, the government mobilized the other tribes in Paktia against them, thus escalating internal bloodshed and hostility among them throughout the province.

## **7- Social, Economical, and Political Conditions**

### **Educational Institutions**

Among the first steps taken by the new monarchy was the closure of female schools and the Women Association of Kabul. The *Irshad-e Naswan* newspaper, the only newspaper published for enlightening women, was also banned. The government recalled the female Afghan students from Turkey and forced them to put on the veil. It imprisoned nine students returning from Turkey. They were arrested as soon as they arrived in Kabul (*Islah*, #55, Hut 1310). In the capital, high school students of Amani, Amania, and Habibia schools were being indoctrinated, with many others expelled under the pretext of being old. The government was determined to produce a new obedient generation. It also closed down all secondary and middle schools in the provinces. In the capital, it allowed under strict discipline the old high schools to remain open for display to foreigners.

Students were abused and beaten by school directors, particularly the Indian teachers. Every day the students had to stand in line on the school courtyard to receive the school principal with a military salute. The punishment for the slightest negligence by a student was slapping on the face before all the students and the punishment for slightest resistance was expulsion from the school. Mr. Ali Mohammad, the education minister, personally kicked and knocked down four students and ordered the school janitors to beat them as if they were thieves and traitors simply because they had spoken their minds. No student dared to talk about politics at school. The government made every effort to produce a timid, sycophantic, and even spying generation.

The monarchy used all these conspiracies to stop the education from exceeding the limit of name and exhibition. During the four-year reign of Nadir, the number of students declined to 45091 and teachers to 165 in this crippled and shameful educational system (See *Afghanistan's Official Book during the Last Fifty Years*, Kabul Press, 1347, p. 63). In sharp contrast, Faiz M. Zakriya, the foreign minister, had admitted that the number of female and male students in Afghan schools during the last year of Amanollah's reign had reached 83,000 (*Islah*, # 55, Dalu 1309, p.3). When Nadir Shah in 1932 decreed the establishment of seven primary schools in seven provinces in the country, the *Islah* newspaper praised it as a miracle. However, the children in these schools sat on the ground and their teachers had little literacy.

During the Nadir Shah reign, there were no more than 27 schools in the whole country. Only in Kabul, the old secondary and middle schools-Habibia School, Amania School, Amani School, Istaqlal School, Teacher Training School, Agriculture School, and Industry School-remained open. Instead of a medical

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school, the government established a faculty of medicine with a sanatorium in Kabul (See Salanama-e Kabul, 1312).

In order to engage and control the students, the government established in 1930 the Association of Explorers under the supervision of the royal family. The head of the association was Prince M. Zaher, son of Nadir Shah. The supreme explorer of the association was Prime Minister M. Hashem. The supreme commander of the association was Defense Minister Shah Mahmud, and the president of the Sons of Lion was Sardar Zalmay. Only the secretary of the association, who was the Indian Yaqub Scout, and its international commander, Ali M. Khan, the education minister, did not belong to the royal family. Of course, the association covenant was full of oaths of allegiance and service to the king and absolute subordination to the superiors. Obviously, the International Association of London Scouts was the first to officially recognize this association.

The monarchy pursued the same procedure in establishing educational, defense, foreign, and other clubs, involving and engaging the civil and military elite in these institutions under official surveillance. After their office hours, the participants remained in the clubs until evening, sporting and playing; and when they returned home, they were too exhausted to think about social and political issues in their country.

The monarchy tried to tell the world that while the Afghan people were inherently against education and acquiring knowledge, progress and civilization, the government had established 27 schools-for a population of 15 million people-and opened a faculty of medicine for a few students. In fact, with the closure of the schools, the government was engaged in building pilgrimage houses in Hejaz, Saudi Arabia, and religious schools in Afghanistan-such as Darol Ulum, Madrasa-e Hefaz, and Jamiat ul-Ulama in Kabul; Najam ul-Madares in Nangarhar; Madrasa-e Mohammadia in Kandahar; Darol Ulum in Herat; Madrasa-e Hefaz in Maimana, or nominal orphanages and asylums (1930-1931).

Before Nadir Shah, there were 205 Afghan students, including 10 girls, in Turkey. With the help of King Amanollah, a number of them returned to Afghanistan during the rebellion and Nadir Shah recalled the rest. Only a few of them-particularly those from the ruling clan or related to the new regime-were given positions in the military establishment. Among them were Mohammad Karim, a member of the royal family, who became governor of Kabul despite his academic failure; Aref Khan, who became commander of Kabul Army Corp and later ambassador to Soviet Union; Mohammad Qassem, who became army general and later extraordinary minister and plenipotentiary to Italy; Mohammad Anwar, who became army general and commander; Zakriya Khan, army general and commander in Ghazni, with Abdol Ahad Malekyar (from Ghazni), who became deputy commander, army commander, and minister of the interior; Mohammad Safar (from Nuristan), who became a major army general. All of them became millionaires

and all of them were Mohammadzais except the last two persons, who were protégés of the new government.

Only two other students, M. Afzal Naseri and M. Ali Abawi, reached the ranks of brigadier general, but they were forced to resign later. Of the remaining 194 students—one of them (Abdol Baqi, a major) was killed in the fighting against Saqqao in Mazar-e Sharif and another (Mohammad Asghar, another officer) refused to return to Afghanistan from Turkey—the rest were deprived of getting any post in the army. Some of them worked in minor office jobs, while dozens of others were either imprisoned or expelled from the military. Many of them had become craftsmen and shopkeepers, such as Abdol Latif Ghazi, who had heroically fought against the British in the Paktia front. He had a meager fabric shop in an alley in Kabul, selling thread and needles.

The government followed the same policy with regard to other Afghan students coming from Germany, France, Italy, and Soviet Union. Former graduates from the Soviet Union, France, and Italy—excluding Gen. Abdol Ghafur Mohammadzai and General Abdol Qayum Barakzai, with Ahsan and Gholam Dastagir, who were graduates of civil aviation—were now either unknown translators or had left the country or were in prisons, such as Lt. Mohammad Yaqob, Mir Gholam Hamed Bahar, Gholam Haider, Mohammad Ghous, and many others.

### **The Press**

The monarchy banned all of the free and private printing houses, such as the printing houses of *Anis* and Rafiq, monopolizing all the printing materials. It also assigned Kabul Custom to check import of printing and typing machines by reporting to the government all lists, numbers, and names of importers. An importer had to report to the government the name and identity of a buyer. Government offices did not have permission to print non-official materials. Nadir Shah usurped the private *Anis* newspaper and put it under the state sponsorship. He checked all reports and articles of the government newspapers and magazines before publication. He himself read and censored the contents of *Kabul Majalla*. Instead of free newspapers, the government published *Hay Al al-Fallah*, a religious magazine published by the Jamiat ul-Ulama. It also put two mullas (Mohammad Khugyani and Borhanadin Kushki) in charge of the *Anis* and *Islah* newspapers. Henceforth, all of the government publications began to be superstitious, sermonizing, and superficial.

The government in 1931 established for publicity Kabul Literary Association, later called the Press Department. Some members of the association faced severe punishment after refusing to comply with the government's wishes. The literary associations in Herat and Kandahar were established in 1932 for the same purpose.

Nobody in the whole country dared to write a word about political or social problems or to censure the hostile British policy. Mentioning the name of King Amanollah or social revolution was considered a crime.

The *Anis* newspaper in 1929 under the headline of "security" wrote: "Not only thieves and bandits are enemies of security, but anyone who puts a bit of confusion into the people's minds and senses is also an enemy of our security and welfare."

The *Islah* newspaper was full of pro-monarchy sermons, exalting the ruling family but condemning the former regime. The contents of the publication consisted of excerpts from faked letters of gratitude from "dignitaries" and "the merciful royal replies," with dictated speeches on religious and national occasions. Sometimes, it indulged in descriptions of strange phenomena, such as a two-headed sheep, a five-footed calf, or a three-necked roaster, and other odd things (See collections of the first four years of *Islah*, particularly issue # 258, Jawza 1313). During the last year of Nadir Shah's reign, the newspaper under these titles "Preserving the Purity of the Tongue" and "Gossip and Nonsensical Talk Must Be Avoided" tried to persuade the public to avoid discussing the political and social issues of the country (# 225 and # 247, Thawr and Jawza, 1313).

The official press and history textbooks tried to present Nadir Shah and his brothers as the saviors of the country, the founders of the Afghan state, the promoters of civilization and civility, and the ultimate goal and destination of the Afghan people, while the life of the nation and its history was considered a meaningless story. The newly born class of regressive writers and poets indulged in such a flattering and boot licking race for the ruling family that their successors still knowingly or unknowingly run on the same shameful track. Their trite works have been a cause of anger and shame for the true Afghan intellectuals. In the course of time, this slavish and mercenary class became so skilled in sycophancy that each member of the class is now considered a "matchless inventor" of panegyric titles and the art of flattery in Central Asia.

Mirza Nowroz, the royal secretary, censored, with threat, this writer's historical essays, which were published under the title "Afghanistan in one View" in *Majalla-e Kabul* (Kabul Magazine), whenever he noticed in them a criticism of the British policy or a mention of its defeat. He was also the president of the Literary Association. Nadir Shah also banned a series of articles titled "The Pen in the Hands of Strangers," which was published by the same magazine because they revealed the maliciousness of the British writers toward Afghanistan. He ordered that the magazine should instead publish the classical parables of Saadi's *Bostan*. The magazine also published an article titled "Purity of Tongue," which called on the Afghan intellectuals to exercise restraint with regard to political and social issues (See collections of *Kabul Magazine*, 1310 and 1312).

Sometimes censorship was without any limit. Sardar Gholam Serwer Guya selected a lyric poem and published it in the *Anis* newspaper. The poem was

censored because it had the word "red," which was considered the slogan of revolution. The Royal Secretariate reprimanded Serwer Juya, the acting editor of *Anis* and discharged him from the newspaper office. The government put him in prison for 13 years. However, Mr. Guya, a member of the Mohammadzai clan, being immune from punishment, was praised as a great poet and literary figure in literary meetings, while he had never composed a poem or written a book. Also Hassan Salimi, head clerk of *Islah*, who had published in the newspaper an article by Sardar Sultan Ahmad about the approach of winter and the need for helping the poor, was accused of espousing the socialist ideology and condemned of being an atheist by the regime mullas. He escaped through Herat to Iran, where he has lived to this day, while the writer, Sardar Sultan Ahmad, was promoted to high government positions, even to the Foreign Ministry because he belonged to the royal clan.

Singers and musicians were not exempt from the censorship either. One night at Kabul Hotel, Ostad Qassem, a famous Afghan singer, sang a song that began with these words: "What is gallantry and generosity? It is but love of the homeland and a cleansing of the heart from spite and hate against one's brother." The following day, Ostad Qassem was summoned to the palace and asked to sing the same song. Then the king ordered that the Kabul Literary Association should select songs for Qassem. The director of the association, Ahmad Ali Durani Hindi, was ordered to select for Qassem proper poems from the classical books of *Golistan* and *Bostan* of Saadi and that he should sing only those songs in the future.

The government imposed with force and deception all of these measures in the area of national education and the press before the watching eyes of the patriotic and intellectual class, whose views were constantly challenged and insulted. Therefore, a bloody clash between the patriotic advocates of freedom and the ruling establishment was inevitable.

The banal press was ready to exaggerate even the most nominal step that the monarch took and presented it to the world as something extraordinary and miraculous. About all that corruption and destruction in the country, it never said a word even in a sarcastic way. For example, when Nadir Shah rebuilt the ruins of Bala Hesar in Kabul, where Cavagnari and the British troops were killed, the press was full of praise for the action. However, nobody asked why the historical Shahrara Tower, which was a monument for the British defeat in the Second Afghan-British War, was abandoned in ruin?

The press for a long time was rife with thanks and public gratitude for the monarchy when the British government gave back the Dukalam village of Nuristan to Afghanistan, while the larger Pashtunistan area was under the persecution of British imperialism. (This village, located between the Arnawi River and Konar River, had only 30 families. During the Saqqao rebellion, Mehtar Chitral had built a fort on a high hill in the village, which he considered his own.) In 1930, the people



of the autonomous frontier areas, led by the Red Shirt Party, rose against the British rule. The people of Waziristan and Afridi followed suit, while threatening Peshawar. In Tira, the Mohmand tribesmen rose against the British rule. These movements, led by Faqir Ipi, the Waziristan leader, inflicted heavy human and material losses on the forces of the British government, which had to evacuate gradually its military posts in the border area. However, the Afghan government did nothing other than silently watching this exciting national scene.

On this subject, Fraser-Tyler, British Plenipotentiary Minister to Kabul, with great satisfaction and praise, wrote:

*"Again and again in those turbulent days, during the Red Shirt and Afridi trouble of 1930-31 and in the Mohmand operation of 1933, deputations of tribesmen who had come to ask for help against the British were sent back from Kabul with nothing to show for their trouble but some salutary advice. The policy may be said to have been negative, but it was as far as the King dared to go. No tribesman, disturbed at British penetration, of the frontier areas, received either help or encouragement to take up arms against this relentless pressure on his freedom...(See Afghanistan by Fraser-Tyler, printed in London, 1950).*

### **Social and Economic Conditions**

During his reign, Nadir Shah did not take any steps in developing industrial, agricultural, economical and other production resources. For this reason, the government revenues plunged to 108 million afghanis from 180 million during the Amanollah regime (See *Afghanistan in the Last Five Years*, 1347, PP. 55-67). The economic infrastructure remained stagnant, with agriculture not moving a step ahead. The government closed down the Amania Agriculture School and dismissed 23 professional graduates, who were educated abroad. Plowing, reaping, seeding, filtering, hatching machines, with silk-producing centers, were all out of order. Although the industrial institutions-such as the factories for making soap, car repair, fruit conservation, oil drilling, making buttons and jackets, carpentry, and the textile in Jabal Seraj and Kandahar-were in operation, the government made no further improvement. Later, the leather processing factory, the fur-sewing factory, and the factory for making matches, which the government owned, were sold to private merchants and the wool factory was leased (See *Afghanistan during the Last Five Years*).

Of course, the monarchy, instead of building the economic infrastructure, paid attention to trade facilities. For this reason, it built the Shakari road, which the Amanollah regime had planned before. In March 1930, Abdol Majid Zaboli, a merchant from Herat, established a company with 5 million afghanis from the state. This company, which took control of the foreign trade, the purchases for the

government, the exchange and banking, with the right to issue monetary notes and monopoly in importing such important items as sugar and petrol, including the monopoly in exporting cotton, wool, and sheep skin-collected enormous profit. It was privatized after a short time. In 1933, it took on the form of a private bank under the name of Melli Bank, reaping massive profit by taking over the country's main foreign trade. The Amanollah regime from 1921 to 1928 had already paved the way for foreign trade expansion with Britain, the Soviet Union, France, Poland, Egypt, Finland and Switzerland.

The players of this new trade and brokering scene were Abdol Majid Zaboli, Abdol Khaleq, Seyyid Karim Mokhtarzadeh Herati, Mohammad Omar Kabuli, Musa Khan Kandahari, and a few other merchants, who chose as their partners elements from the ruling clan and the feudal nobility. To facilitate the trade, the monarchy established in 1930 a department for settling trade disputes.

It is worth noting that after the country's political independence during the Amanollah regime, the creation of capitalistic relations within the old feudal system gained more acceleration. Because of this development, social changes appeared as reform programs during the Amanollah regime. Although this period of change and transition did not run its course, it weakened the feudal system, and the feudal ownership of land began to change into private ownership, with the agricultural products flowing into the trade markets. Therefore, the consumption market in the country began to expand. However, the tax increase, with the trade capital activity, was accelerating the transfer of land from the hand of the farmers to the landowners, the merchants, and the profiteering lenders, thus causing further pain for the toiling masses in the country.

During the Nadir Shah reign, which focused its attention on strengthening the merchants and feudal landowners, a number of tribal chiefs regained the privileges they had lost in the previous regime. A large number of mullas also gained influence in the education system, and the judiciary.

### **The Army**

Nadir Shah made efforts in establishing a powerful and equipped army-an army with the discipline of obedience and subordination. He monopolized the military top ranks to members of his family, his relatives and dependents. The second ranks he gave to those officers, who were committed to obeying and venerating the ruling family. Therefore, professional and scientific expertise was not a required qualification for acquiring military ranks. A simple mind, with a spirit of sacrifice for the king and his family, was enough. For the same reason, all of the known and experienced officers, as well as those educated abroad, were gradually

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expelled from the army or transferred to minor posts, except for those who belonged to the nobility or served the nobility.

For example, Nadir's brother, Shah Mahmud, was the marshal and defense minister. Nadir's son, Mohammad Zaher, was the deputy defense minister. His nephew, Assadollah, was the commander of the Guard. His nephew, Mohammad Daud, was the commander of the Nangarhar army. The chief of the Army Corp and president of the war factory and military arsenals were Ahmad Ali Ludin and Abdollah Shahji the Panjabi Coach Driver, both of whom did not know even the military alphabet. While officers, such as General Mohammad Omar Soor, General Abdol Latif, General Abdol Qayum, etc, with young officers educated abroad-except a number of Mohammadzais and those dependent on them-were either expelled from the army or demoted to translation, bookkeeping, and other clerical jobs. At any rate, the majority of the army officers, enjoying benefits and privileges from the monarchy, were prepared to protect the government and simultaneously suppress any type of national resistance. With the support of the army, the ruling family could exercise its will on the Afghan people.

## **Foreign Policy**

The Nadir Shah family was viewed as an Anglophile clique for thirty years. Even King Abdur Rahman, who himself followed a pro-British foreign policy, openly introduced the Nadir family as being dependent on the British government. He said the British had imposed on him the return of the family from India to Afghanistan, as he also made a similar claim with regard to his policy. Of course, he was entitled to have such an opinion. However, this policy was not sound and beneficial to the country. Nevertheless, he considered the Nadir family to be a British puppet and mercenary even though he himself followed a pro-British policy.

The family grandfather, Sardar Sultan M. Talayi, governor of Peshawar, had turned over Peshawar province to the Punjab state in return for the territorial integrity and independence of Afghanistan, while he himself had accepted to serve Ranjit Sing. Likewise, Talayi's son, Sardar Yahya, had made his son-in-law, Amir Yaqub, to sign the disgraceful Gandomak Treaty. His sons, Sardar M. Asef and Sardar M. Yusof, had lived for years on British money and under the British flag in India. The sons of the two sardars, Nadir and his brothers, with his cousins, were born in British India and raised with British stipends.

This family rose to power during the reign of King Habibollah. At first, many Afghans considered them strangers. King Habibollah's deputy called them Indian sardars. Nevertheless, nobody dared to antagonize them against the king's wish. During the Amanollah regime, which had a Cabinet that discussed and resolved the country's issues, the political identity of the Nadir family began to crystallize.

In domestic policy, King Amanollah and most of his ministers wanted quick revolutionary changes. In foreign policy, they wanted to stay away from Britain and be close to the Soviet Union. In contrast, Nadir Shah pursued a regressively domestic policy and a pro-British foreign policy. It was obvious that Nadir Shah favored the British government in his foreign policy.

While the British delegation was engaged in talks with the Afghan delegation for signing the Treaty of 1921, the Amanollah government's policy was to keep aflame the liberationist campaigns of the frontier people against the British influence and to continue threatening and engaging the British government to accept the Afghan terms in the talks. To secure this objective, the Afghan government was actively supporting the campaigns in all of the border areas, particularly in Waziristan. The officials whom the government sent in the area were seriously engaged in their missions.

As a result, the people continued their attacks against the British, causing panic to the British Indian government. At this time, Musa Ghazi, the great leader of the Waziristan mujahedin, sent his cousin, Musa Khan, to King Amanollah to talk about the issues of jihad. He remained in Kabul for more than one month, but

Nadir did not allow him to see the king. Resenting this intentional act of Nadir, Musa Khan became disenchanted with the Kabul court. With anger and revulsion, he returned to Waziristan, where he caused the local people to lose their hope and interest in the monarchy. With the support ending from Kabul and the people's isolation, the Waziri people had to reduce their campaign and become inclined toward reaching a compromise with the British. Therefore, with decreasing pressure on its forces in the tribal areas, the British delegation insisted on its demands in the talks in Kabul.

Well, who was responsible for this? Of course, it was Nadir, the defense minister, who was officially in charge of all the free border affairs, including the border affairs in Paktia and Nangarhar. Nadir was following another special policy, as he did not allow Musa Khan to see the king. He paid Musa Khan 100 rupees as travel expenses to return to Waziristan.

When Fazl M. Mojadaddi (Shams al-Meshayekh), an anti-British patriotic cleric and a supporter of Amanollah, noticed Nadir's irresponsible behavior toward Musa Khan, he wrote this letter to him:

*Your esteemed honor, today Musa Khan Massoudi was dismissed from your presence. Tomorrow he will leave by your order. My dear brother, his hopeless return is completely wrong. The relationship of the Islamic state of Afghanistan with the frontier people will be broken, and they will certainly make peace with the (English) infidels. The wall of the house of Islam will fall into the hands of the enemies of the faith. When a man of Musa Khan's caliber comes here, stays for sometime, but he cannot have a chance to meet the head of the state and leaves, it means that in time of need the words of the state leaders will not be trusted. What would have been the harm to your politics if he was received by his Majesty at least once and His Majesty would have given him a few kind and hopeful words? He is still awaiting and it is imperative that His Majesty accept his presence, otherwise beware that the two-year efforts of our government will be futile. Moreover, some other affairs, particularly the frontier, are important and I will explain this during a meeting. Nevertheless, Musa's waiting is extremely important. It was too late for me to come over. May God grant you health! Please write a reply so that I may rest assured,*

*Fazl Mohammad Mojadaddi.*

In reply to the letter, Nadir wrote the following letter:

*"Your esteemed honor... Hazrat Saheb:*

*You have always wished for the good of the state. About Musa Khan, (I should say) he has not explained the whole thing to you. I made him understand that he should not reveal the favor of His Majesty, so that the infidels may not discover it. He was handed a letter (that authorized him) to receive a sum of 8000 rupees, which was issued under the name of Jernail, and to pass it to the senior Musa Khan. Granting mantles and badges may compromise our secrecy in the frontier. Therefore, it was not accepted. I informed*

*him fully about the favors of the king... You may kindly inquire about it. If, however, he is not satisfied, I do not know what else could be done."*

In reply to Nadir's letter, Mojadaddi wrote:

*"My dear brother, may God be kind to you! There is no need for mantles and badges, but (he needs) only a hand-kissing meeting with his majesty and a few words of satisfaction from his mouth. To him this will be equal to thousands of rupees. His hopelessness comes only from his not being able to see his majesty. If a meeting of greeting is made available to him, after that his return will be beautiful and it will gain the heart of the people.*

*I trust you to God,  
Fazl Mohammad Mojadaddi*

(The original copies of these exchanged letters, signed by Shams al-Meshayekh and Nadir, are kept by Mohammad Masum Mojadaddi known as Miyajan, son of Shams al-Meshayekh. The letter does not have a date.)

After writing these letters, when Shams al-Meshayekh felt it is useless to insist on Nadir, he wrote a four-point letter to the king. (*Afghanistan in the Course of History I*, pp. 783-784.) The following is the third point of the letter, which deals with the government policy on the autonomous frontiers:

*"Third point: Pleasing the people of the frontiers is an obligation of the time and of the most important affairs. At any rate, having (the support of) the frontiers secretly or openly at even a high cost of money and equipment in both cases of war or peace with the infidels is imperative because the frontiers are like ramparts and fortifications. When the enemy passes the walls and fortifications and enters the fort, resistance becomes difficult and rest will be impossible. Experience shows that in the eastern part of the country (Nangarhar) both the military and the people could not do much because at first the frontier was not cooperating with the army."*

Anyway, because of such political incidents, Nadir and his family were finally expelled from serving the state. With his brothers, Hashem and Shah Wali, he went to France, while the other brother lived as a hostage in Kabul. However, Nadir was not without activity there. He was in contact through a mediator with the viceroy of India. The mediator was A. Ali Durani, a grandson of Shah Shaja Abdali, who lived in Lahore. This person came to Kabul during the Nadir Shah reign; and as a royal confidant, he became director of Kabul Literary Association. At a nightly party at the height of his intoxication from hashish, he proudly confided his mediation role to a younger member of the association. Later when foreign agents and regressive elements throughout the country conspired rioting and sedition against the Amanollah regime, once more Nadir established contacts with the British Embassy in France, as Fraser-Tytler, the British ambassador to Kabul, proudly writes in his book *Afghanistan*:

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*Nadir Khan remained for two years as Afghan Minister in Paris, during which time he had many opportunities to study the post-war world of Europe, and where among other contacts he met and enjoyed the friendship of Lord Crewe, at that time British Ambassador in Paris... He resigned his appointment in Paris and returned to Grasse in southern France, where his brothers, Sardar Hashem Khan and Sardar Shah Wali Khan, joined him. There they bided their time, and awaited better days. (P.225)*

In another place in the book he writes:

*"Among his own people and by some foreign observers King Nadir Shah was held after his death to compare favourably with any of his predecessor, and indeed by his achievements and by the foundations of stability and good government which he laid to have deserved the title of a "great" administrator. In 1931, the British Government helped him to the extent of 10,000 rifles and about 180, 000 pounds in cash (p.231). He eliminated all Russian personnel from the air force, and their replacement by Afghans. He also refused to accept Russian commercial missions." (p.235)*

This is how Mr. Tytler shows his good will toward Nadir Shah's brothers:

*"Nadir Shah was indebted to his brothers' cooperation, and particularly of His Royal Highness, Sardar Hashem Khan. The combination of the King and his brother produced a well-nigh perfect form of benevolent autocracy, which in the state of Afghan society in 1929 was the only possible form of Government... In matters of defense they had the loyal cooperation of their youngest brother, Shah Mahmud, while Shah Wali, "the Conqueror of Kabul," kept a watchful eye from London and then from Paris on Afghan interests in Europe and on the movement of the ex-King." (P. 243)*

In the introduction to his book, ahead of all this praise, Mr. Fraser-Tytler says these words about Hashem Khan, uncle of Zahir Shah:

*"And finally there is His Royal Highness Sardar Mohammad Hashem Khan, uncle of King Zahir Shah and Prime Minister of Afghanistan during my time there as Counselor, Charge d'Affair, and British Minister. I was fortunate indeed in having the opportunity to work in close association with a Prince who was not only a statesman of broad and penetrating outlook, but was also a great gentleman. I owe to him much of my knowledge of this country and his people, and through my association with him, I learnt to understand something of the qualities of the great Durrani chiefs among who he and his brothers were such outstanding figures." (p.xiii)*

Tytler was expected to praise the Nadir family because it served the British interests in the best possible way in this part of Asia. When Nadir Shah and his brothers gained the monarchy, with such background, they followed a unilateral pro-British policy under the mask of a neutral and independent foreign policy. In addition, the British government directly or indirectly dictated the main administrative and social outlines of the Afghan domestic policy, and the Afghan society reflected the manifestation of this policy. In Kabul, there was a rumor that the Afghan monarchy had signed with the British government a secret treaty in London, according to which the British would receive certain political and military

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concessions (when necessary). During the inauguration of the so-called National Assembly in 1931, Nadir Shah gave this explanation in denial of the rumor:

*"My policy in Afghanistan has no secrecy; it is an open policy. I have approved all of the treaties that the previous government had signed with the friendly countries. I have not signed any other secret or open treaty. Of course, last year (1930), some countries helped us, such as the British government, which assisted Afghanistan without any condition. The assistance consisted of a loan of 175, 000 pounds without interest, 10,000 barrels of rifles, and 5,000,000 bullets. The most useful policy for Afghanistan, which I have always recommended it, is this: Afghanistan's geographical location can never tolerate secret policies."* (Islah, # 93, Saratan 16, 1310.)

Nadir Shah, pretending neutrality, signed a number of treaties with different states. In June 1931, he signed a neutrality and non-aggression treaty with the Soviet Union in Kabul. In September 1932, the two governments signed the agreement for designation of border commissariats. The two governments, Afghanistan and Britain, also re-confirmed in London in 1930 the Kabul Treaty (November 22, 1921), with the four letters annexed, and the Trade Convention (June 5, 1923), with the letters exchanged between Mr. Arthur Henderson and Shah Wali (May 6, 1930).

Afghanistan and Japan also signed a treaty of friendship on November 19, 1930. Ambassadors of Afghanistan and Brazil to Ankara also signed a treaty of friendship between the two countries in 1933. In the same year, Afghan ambassador to Moscow, Abdol Hosayn Aziz, signed treaties with Estonia and Latvia. The government signed a treaty with Hungary in 1934. Afghanistan signed other treaties with the United States in March 1936, with Czechoslovakia in September 1937, and with the Netherlands in July 1939. It had also signed friendship treaties with Saudi Arabi in May 1932 and with Iraq in December 1932.

In 1933, Iran's claim over a border strip (Musa Abad) strained the relations between the two countries. Finally, Afghan Foreign Minister, Faiz M. Zakriya and Iranian Ambassador to Kabul M. Taqi Esfandiyari signed a four-item agreement on March 7, 1933. The agreement accepted mediation by a third country. In this case, the Turkish government was chosen to arbitrate in the dispute. The British Gen McLain had caused the dispute in the 1891 demarcation between Iran and Afghanistan when he intentionally left unmarked the strip.

The Nadir Shah monarchy, which expelled the Russian air force personnel and refused to receive the Russian trade delegations, could not openly grant concession to Britain. Therefore, it turned to the major Western states, and, when necessary, it recruited personnel from Germany, France, Italy, and Turkey. Turks were not only assisting the regime in the military and health areas, they had also gained the credibility of acting as political advisors.

In reality, however, the regime's foreign policy revolved around British diplomacy, with its orbit decreasing everyday. In other words, it was constantly



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moving closer to the center. While the British did not insist on secrecy, its agents, such as Allah Nawaz Multani, Abdollah Shahji, and others, were flirting and strutting on the political stage. In contrast to the previous century, British agents did not have to pretend they were anti-British because there was no need for wearing such a mask in Afghanistan. In official meetings in the capital and major cities in the country, there was the talk of British grandeur, power, and influence in the world. They explained Afghanistan's problems in terms of opposition to the British. Therefore, they rationalized that an unconditional surrender to Britain would benefit the country. The government interpreted as hostility against itself any verbal or active opposition to the British. Of course, this arrogant carelessness by the British agents and the ruling family had ignited a fire of hatred and revenge-particularly among the dissident intellectuals-which finally roared in the sounds of the pistols of Afghan patriots.

Allah Nawaz Multani had become a box of Afghan diplomacy secrets, while the Panjabi Coach Driver Shahji was holding the rein of the country's internal and external intelligence. Faiz M. Zakriya, the foreign minister; Ali Mohammad, the education minister; Mirza M. Shah, chief of the intelligence, and others were the secondary functionaries, who walked behind these two persons. Even Prime Minister M. Hashem Khan, who roared like a lion, trembled as a willow twig from the threat of Shahji. For example, Torah Baz Khan, the Kabul police commandant, during an inspection of Saraye Muti Prison, in response to a prisoner's request for some facility, shouted: "The world knows that the British government is the falcon and Afghanistan the sparrow. You have disrespected this falcon, and thus you deserve punishment. How can you request facility from the government?"

On the other hand, the Nadir Shah government was intentionally straining political relations with the Soviet Union, particularly after the problem with Ebrahim Beg. The coldness in the relationship reached an unbearable point when the two countries faced the issue of closing their consulates. Later, the Soviet Union rejected Afghan Ambassador Abdol Hosayn Aziz to Moscow and accused him of inciting tension in relations between the Soviet Union and Japan. .

The British agents had given this incorrect impression to the Afghan government that the duration of the Russian socialist regime was a phenomenon born out of the British policy because Britain did not want Russia to become a powerful global capitalist empire. These agents also said that in case of any threat from the Soviet Union, Britain would be able to steer a revolution in the Soviet Union and destroy the Russian socialist regime. Of course, the purpose of this propaganda was to keep the Afghan monarchy dependent on the British government. Therefore, despite apparent diplomatic ceremonies, the relations between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union continued with utmost coldness and suspicion.

## **Domestic Policy**

Nadir Shah called his regime a “constitutional monarchy.” He passed on October 31, 1931 a new constitution through the appointed Grand Council (Loya Jirga). He approved on August 24, 1932 the law of the new administration’s structure, while he had established the so-called National Assembly in 1930. He abolished all of the laws of the previous regime, including the civil and military penal laws. The laws that Nadir Shah brought under the name of “*Usulnameh*” were so demagogic and exhibitionist that even the Cabinet did not pay attention to them, for what the monarchy did in practice was in direct opposition to these laws.

## **The Jirga**

To mask the real face of his regime, Nadir Shah from the start of his reign in October 1929 proclaimed his policy is based on Islam and Islamic law. In the meantime, he talked about progress, industry, agriculture, and commerce. Later in September 1930, he established a jirga (council) of 301 appointed members from the provinces and two hundred nine government officials and military officers. He also allowed 18 foreign diplomats as observers in the council. With most of its members being mullas, landowners, and appointed officials, the king and his family held the rein of the assembly, which had to approve what was dictated to it.

Before inaugurating the jirga, the king invited its members to a party in order to keep them under his influence. He granted each member a cloak and a turban. The jirga had two goals. Its first goal was to nullify the progressive resolutions that the previous 1929 elected council under King Amanollah had passed in Paghman. The following were some of the resolutions intended to be nullified: uniforms for government employees, disclosure of government employees’ assets, the employment law, the amendment of the power of judges and governors, freedom of the press, abolition of underage marriage, freedom of choice for women to wear or discard the veil, abolition of titles, change of the national banner, clerical certificates for mullas, the general inspection office, the modern civil courts, and the 150-member National Assembly.

The second goal of the jirga was to reject Amanollah’s request for the return of his personal assets. The new jirga in a resolution passed on September 13, 1930 accused Amanollah of being a traitor and thief and demanded the return of properties stolen from the country. The jirga also delegated Nadir Shah to retrieve the stolen wealth. (See *Repudiation of the False Rumors of the Deposed King* and Resolution 5 of the 1930 Loya Jirga, Printed in Kabul, March 1931). The jirga issued its resolution on the exchanged letters between Amanollah Khan and Nadir Shah.

When King Amanollah left Afghanistan and resided in Italy, for the first time he felt that he had to earn a living for his family. As an eastern prince, he felt hopeless, fearing the exhaustion of the limited wealth he possessed. Declining from his moral position, he resorted to the government by writing this private letter to Shah Wali, Afghan minister in London, and his brother-in-law:

*"My dear brother, Shah Jan (Shah Wali Khan), praise to God, we are all fine. I pray to God for your health. It has been long since I have not heard from you and the Fruit of My Father's Life (Thamar ul-Saraj was the name of his sister married to Shah Wali Khan). In my world of loneliness, I will be pleased to receive a letter from a friend. I have no other desire. Since the earning of my assets is not enough for my family, I request you to quickly let me know who is managing my personal wealth and that of Soriya (his wife) in Kabul and how we can regain them. What will my dear brother, Nadir Shah, wish to do that I should know, so that I may save myself from draining my wealth? As for the rest, I only wish progress for my homeland. Kiss Thamar ul-Saraj and her children for me. I trust you to God!"*

(It is worth knowing that King Amanollah had given his lands and those of his wife to the State. He had kept as his private properties the wool and leather factories in Kabul.)

Amanollah did not receive a clear letter from Shah Wali. Therefore, on June 18, 1930, he sent a direct telegram to Nadir Shah: *"To the presence of His Majesty, the Ghazi, in whose hands are my assets, lands, and factories and those of Soraya? And who is managing them? What is the government's view?"*

*Amanollah, Rome"*

Nadir Shah sent the following reply from his government to King Amanollah: *"His Majesty, Shahriyar Ghazi (Victor King), knew well that these assets had been gradually snatched away from Bait ul-Mal (Public Treasury) and put under the name of personal properties. In their first session, they (members of the Jirga) decreed that the assets should be returned to their original sources. That is, since these assets belonged to the Bait ul-Mal, they were returned to Bait ul-Mal."* (Islah #14, Mizan 1309)

Of course, Nadir Shah took advantage of Amanollah's plight by presenting the letters to the Jirga and then rejecting them. Certainly, King Amanollah was not right in his request for the return of what he called his personal property, for no king in Afghanistan owned personal property. Whatever they called personal property belonged to the nation. Therefore, Amanollah could not be an exception. However, he had the right to receive stipend from the Bait ul-Mal (the State Treasury) in return for his services since foreign enemies conspired against him and drove him out of the country.

The claim about the stolen cash and jewelry from the state treasury was doubtful, for he had to leave the country in a state of emergency. He did not have the opportunity to rob the treasury. He might have taken a small amount with him.

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The way he lived in Italy and his urgent need for cash justifies this view. To support his family, he had to have a job. He bought grocery for his family from public markets and carried it home on his bicycle. Otherwise, he would not have sent a letter of allegiance to King Zaher, praised his opponent, talked about kinship, and pledged to avoid the national campaign against the regression and despotism of the ruling regime. He did all this for receiving a few dollars a month (see a copy of the letter in *Islah*, November 18, 1948). If he had stolen so much jewelry and cash, his children, like those of the Nadir Shah family, would have had millions of dollars in savings in European banks. The reasons for these accusations and disgraces, together with his mistakes and weaknesses during his reign, should be sought elsewhere.

Amanollah became king when he was 27 and abdicated at 37. Despite his mistakes, he was a liberationist, who raised the banner of independence in the East against British imperialism. He also built the foundation for modern social progress in Afghanistan. Of course, British imperialism, with its domestic and foreign agents, was his number one enemy, which never refrained from attacks and ignoble propaganda against him.

The enemy kept attacking him inside and outside the country in order to destroy him physically and spiritually until his death. Earlier, Zaman Shah and Sultan Tipo confronted a similar situation. Secret British hands and plots drove him out of the country. Outside the country, he came under the enemy's surveillance. He was poisoned and later faced poverty until he lost his balance.

Amanollah pledged allegiance to Zaher Shah and stopped his campaign, particularly at a time when the British left India, when both Afghanistan and Pashtunistan were ready to receive him, and when both India and Pakistan mentioned his name. With his surrender to Zaher Shah's monarchy, the political existence of the Afghan dissident compatriots ended abroad. Inside the country, the remaining intellectual dissidents became convinced that in national and progressive campaigns it was a mistake to rely on the royal princes and the nobility class. Real campaign must start from society and lower classes.

Taking advantage of Amanollah's mistake in requesting the return of his private property, Nadir Shah did not only beat his opponent by the feudal jirga, he also cracked down on the nationalist dissidents inside the country. Nadir Shah coined the word "Amanist" (pro Amanollah), which to him meant "traitor to the religion, the State, and the nation." He jailed or executed his opponents under the same name. In his hostility against Amanollah, he became so fanatic and paranoid that he changed the names of Amani School to Nejat School, Amania School to Istaqlal School, and Darol Aman Palace to Darol Fanoon. He even collected from all over the country, and destroyed, all of Amanollah's pictures and all song and anthem records that praised the former monarch.

Nadir Shah, who considered Amanollah's request for his private property a national treason, had now put under Shah Mahmud's name all of the lands (in Tangi Saidan-

e Kabul) that belonged to Queen Soriya, and he had given to members of his family private and state orchards, buildings, lands in Kabul, Paghman, and Jalalabad. Now each one of them owns "personal properties" that worth millions of afghanis or dollars inside and outside the country. They had even divided among themselves the Royal Palace Garden, with Hashem, Shah Wali, Naim, Daud, and Assadollah, selling and buying the premises inside the garden. The Kabul Shahr Ara Garden was granted to Hashem. It was for this reason that the people believed that the ruling family had no right to condemn King Amanollah for claiming his properties. If a regime had such a right in Afghanistan, it had to be a nationalist revolutionary regime, not this regime so steeped in the mire of crime and treachery.

### **The National Assembly**

During the Amanollah reign, a 1000-member jirga (council) in Paghman approved in 1928 the establishment of a 150-member national assembly, with as many educated representatives as possible. The jirga also decided that its members could not nominate themselves for the new assembly. In the same year, however, the Amanollah regime collapsed by the intensity of the Saqqao rebellion in the country. Therefore, the resolutions of the great jirga remained in deferment.

Later, Nadir Shah sought to establish a hollow assembly for show-off and for imposing on it the approval of his decisions. Members of this assembly did not have to be literate. In the assembly, secret voting, balloting, and diversity of representation were not required. From a polling location a number of persons would be taken to a court, where they would be asked to vote for anyone the government approved, a mulla, or khan, or influential figure, who was then provided with a court certificate that introduced him as an elected representative for the assembly.

Furthermore, the assembly, which consisted of 111 persons, was partial in its representation of the provinces. For instance, there were 16 deputies from Kandahar, while Herat had 12 members and the larger province of Mazar-e Sharif had 10 members. Representation in the assembly had not taken into account the size of the populations in the provinces. Moreover, the king appointed president of the new assembly.

After establishing the 301-member Jirga in Kabul on September 1930, Nadir Shah appointed from the same jirga new members for the National Assembly, which inaugurated it in the same month. The king had pre-appointed Abdol Ahad Mahyar, a deputy from Wardak province, as president of the assembly. He remained in the same post until his death.

Abdol Aziz, a deputy from Kandahar, who was editor of the *Tolu Afghan* newspaper, made a speech against Abdol Ahad. In the speech, he proposed that only

the assembly had the right to elect its own president, not the government. The penalty this respectable person paid for the speech was 13 years in prison, where his beard grew white and suffered from vision disorder. His wife lived a life of extreme hardship and his daughter was married to an Indian physician. Torah Baz Khan, the Kabul security commandant, imprisoned him and insulted his father. He ordered his guards to tie his hands and beat him in the face. (This writer, who was also a prisoner, witnessed the scene.)

Strangely enough, for almost half a century, the government continued to perform the mandatory ceremony of laying bouquets of flowers on the tomb of Nadir Shah as the founder of the first assembly of Afghanistan. In addition to this strange and illicitly- born assembly, Nadir Shah also established the House of Nobles in 1931. The House of Nobles, which had 27 members, consisted of notables, clerics, and landowners appointed by the king. The function of this council was to pass the government's proposals, which then would be referred to the National Assembly. It had the power to overrule the resolutions of the National Assembly, while the king could overrule both. In other words, the government created the House of Nobles to neutralize the National Assembly.

### **The Constitution**

Nadir Shah formulated a new constitution in October 1931 in an attempt to present his regime to the outside world as a constitutional monarchy. For example, Article 9 of the new Constitution mentioned the equality of Afghan subjects without religious and sectarian discrimination. Article 11 mentioned that nobody could be arrested and punished without a legal warrant. Article 13 guaranteed the equality of people's rights in official occupations and government employment. Article 16 guaranteed residency immunity. Articles 17, 18, and 19 banned all kinds of torture, persecution, and confiscation of properties. Article 23 guaranteed freedom of the press on the condition of not being against religion. Finally, Article 76 defined the responsibility of Cabinet ministers before the National Assembly.

This charade of the law represented the ultimate fallacy and hypocrisy of the ruling establishment. Nadir Shah did not execute any of these articles during his lifetime. Even the ministers did not know much about the contents of the Constitution. Copies of the Constitution, which remained in warehouses under heavy layers of dust, were not available to civil or military employees or ordinary citizens.

During Nadir Shah's four-year reign, there was absolutely no mention of the articles of the Constitution in any of the resolutions passed by the Cabinet or in any of the government departments. The fundamental purpose of writing the Constitution, as everybody knew, was for its translation and for display abroad-not

for applying it to internal matters. Indeed, the monarchy had abolished all of the civil and penal laws of the past and filled the prisons with new prisoners without any trial. Now and then, private properties were confiscated, houses plundered, men executed and women imprisoned. There was no Islamic or civil law. Only the lips of the ruling brothers were the law of the land.

### **The Court**

At the head of this unrestrained administration was the royal court, which called itself the country's conqueror and treated the people with arrogance and apathy. The court followed the brutality of Amir Abdur Rahman and the ceremonial cult of Amir Habibollah. Members of the ruling family were madly fond of diamond, gems, and glittering ornaments and uniforms. In their poses and gestures, the king, Hashem Khan, and Shah Mahmud respectively aped the British Viceroy, Sardar Nasrollah, and Sardar Enayetollah. They wanted to make the proud Afghan people bow to them. Of course, they managed to subdue some government officials, but the people viewed them as being worse than their predecessors. The people ignored the king and his brothers when they passed by public squares.

The court, which headed the country's administration, consisted of the king, his brothers, and his personal family. Collectively, they considered themselves as the liberators of Afghanistan's independence and the saviors of the nation from the Saqqao government. Therefore, they believed that the Afghan people were obligated to them forever. In formal and private occasions, they wanted to have a lord-servant relationship with the people. They treated even the ministers as their personal servants.

Ali Mohammad (Badakhshani), the education and foreign minister, kissed the hand of another minister (Shah Mahmud, the defense minister) when entering official sessions. As governor of Kandahar, Mohammad Daud, a cousin of the king, fined a minister for five thousand afghanis. He also summoned the governor of Farah to Kandahar, arrested him, and sent him to prison in Kabul. A Lieutenant general sat next to the phaeton driver and took Shah Mahmud's nurse to a tour of the city. A cousin of the king, Wali Khan, in a formal party at a foreign embassy insulted the army joint chief of the staff by calling his father a bad name. Hashem Khan, the prime minister, would accept greetings of his Cabinet ministers by nodding his head. His cousin, Naim Khan, used gestures in communicating with heads of the government departments. Faiz M. Zakriya, the foreign minister would write these words under the names of the non-Mohammadzai candidates listed for foreign missions: "Nothing is wrong with them except their bones are not strongly made." Then he would submit the list to the prime minister.

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The monarchy had to entrust most of the affairs to non-Mohammadzai men because there were only a handful of aristocratic Mohammadzais, with a large number of them lacking in knowledge and education. For this reason, the government sent their youths to schools inside or abroad. Finally, a Mohammadzai semi-educated class was created.

With the carrot and the stick in its hand, the government forced half of its employees to carry the old burden of its aristocratic cult. For instance, they were required to start all their official letters with these words: "Fedayet Sha'wam!" (May I be sacrificed for you!) They had to rise and bow even before a two-year-old child of the royal family. They had to remain patient if insulted and abused by a prince or expelled and ousted from their jobs. Like a flock of sheep, they had to line up behind their bosses, going from office to office to present their Eid greetings to a royal highness. They had to sweat and suffer during the three-day burial and funeral ritual of a deceased member of the royal family. And they had to celebrate the birth of a newborn in the royal family and later write congratulation cards on the circumcision ceremony.

The police took them to the streets when the body of Mohammad Aziz, a brother of the king-an unknown figure to the public-was brought to Afghanistan from Germany. They had to greet respectfully any Indian or Mohammadzai even from a distance. In private and public, they were supposed to pray for the long life of His Majesty and His Highness. And they could not say anything about politics, progress, human rights, and human dignity.

In return for this submission, high-ranking officials enjoyed certain benefits, one of which saved them from facing punishment and discharge from their posts because of involvement in bribery, embezzlement, mistreatment of people, or mismanagement. The more complaint an official received from the public, the more trust he would have from the monarchy-simply because the government wanted to keep the people engaged in internal differences and conflicts, in running around the government offices. For this reason, many lawsuits remained unsettled until the end of Nadir Shah's reign. Officials were permitted to vex the people but not permitted to give their due rights and facilitate their affairs.

In following this policy, the government relied on a number of army officers, who by a single gesture from the above were ready to raze many cities to the ground. They did not feel responsible for their country, not knowing that history would condemn them. Despite all this pressure and coercion, the people, the middle class, and the intellectual class did not go under the insulting burden of the monarchy. When Nadir Shah in a diplomatic car passed through some streets and bazaars in the city, passers-by did not salute him. Shopkeepers turned away from him by keeping themselves busy in their own affairs, while in the past they rose and saluted a passing king. Careless countrymen called him "English nephew" and prisoners in cells and below the hanging ropes condemned the monarchy.



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One day several men, suddenly taken out of their houses, were brought to the royal court and lined up to be executed. Among them was Aslam Sarlech, an officer of the Saqqao regime, who had surrendered to Nadir Shah on pledge of immunity, which he had signed on the Quran. Condemning Nadir Shah's breach of oath, Aslam Sarlech screamed: "By your oath to the Quran you brought me and now you are betraying your pledge like an Angriz (Brit)."

Nadir Shah became furious and ordered his men to pierce Sarlech's body with bayonets.

When officer Mir M. Ismail returned to Kabul from Istanbul, he became sick and was hospitalized in a military school. This writer, with three other persons, went there to visit him. At that time, the Indian Dr. Seyyid Abdol Ghani Shah, the head physician, with another Indian physician and a few hospital staff, entered the room. After a short examination, the Indian head doctor said, "It's okay, you have suffered, and you are mentally weak, but we will take care of you." With a grimace, the patient said, "Until George is in London and Nadir Khan, with Indians, in Kabul, certainly no Afghan will have peace of mind."

An insane person from Wardak was walking in the streets of Kabul. The people called him Khan of Wardak. Sometimes, street boys would annoy him, saying: "May God take you back to Wardak!" Since he resented the idea of returning to Wardak, he would become angry and curse all of the people of Kabul instead of the mischievous kids. One day in the Deh Afghanan bazaar when he started cursing the people of Kabul, a shopkeeper went to him and said, "Khan, you have cursed all of the people of Kabul because of a few kids. This is not fair. If you have the guts, curse the British." The lunatic pointed his finger toward the Royal Arg, saying, "He gets angry." This was a small demonstration of the public impression of the Nadir Shah monarchy.

On the other hand, the behavior of the monarchy, like a magnet, attracted all wicked elements, which live more or less in every country, and mobilized them in the social scene. As a result, the market of ignominy, treason, spying, flattery, and demoralization expanded, particularly after the monarchy decided to change the Afghan nation to a dead and colonial society.

"I will straighten Afghanistan in such a way that a government's janitor can tour the whole country with a bamboo stick and nobody would dare to stare at him," Nadir boasted. The monarchy used two means: "brutality and poverty" to disfigure the people. Brutality strengthened fear and poverty bred destitution and greed. Fear and greed caused a number of proud and honorable people to bend before the tyranny.

In such society and atmosphere, the duty of the Afghan patriots and intellectuals in their national campaign was quite heavy and dangerous. Truly, many sacrificed their youth on this path, the pleasures of life, and even their lives, without expecting any reward in the future. At any rate, after the rise of Nadir Shah's

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monarchy, Afghan dissidents started their campaign against it in two fronts: inside and outside. The campaign was also against the British colonialist government. For the same reason, the campaign was harshly suppressed.

## **8- Campaign against Regression and Tyranny**

The monarchy, controlling the executive, judicial, and military powers, kept the vast majority of the people, who were farmers, under the burden of the old bureaucracy and feudalism, thus reviving the old hierarchical customs of semi-serfdom, proprietorship, and mercenary work. Therefore, the entire farming class, entangled in its own problems, was deprived of education and totally isolated from politics. Many farm workers were poorer than farmers. A farm worker had to have one or two donkeys, with a couple of iron shovels. He had to spread human manure on one or two acres of land a day. During the irrigation and harvest thrashing, he had to work for the landowner to earn forty sir of wheat, 120 sir of hay, and a few sir of corn a year. A farm worker, with his wife and children, lived without entertainment, medicine, and secondary needs. His situation was worse than that of a small farmer. A farmer without land worked as a sharecropper on a landowner's land. His wife knitted and his children helped him raise sheep. Shepherds and small cattlemen had a worse condition.

With this condition, the government, wearing the mask of shariah with support of the clerical class, did not have to worry about a popular uprising. These two—the ruling class and the clerics—took maximum advantage of the goodness of the traditional and religious beliefs of the Afghan masses. With the power of preaching and indoctrination, they interpreted as predetermined and from God all the social pains and miseries, mismanagement, and the tyranny of the monarchy. They kept the people in a state of ignorance because to them the awakening and self-awareness of the masses was a threat against the despotic aristocratic and feudal establishment.

The cities were no better than the countryside. The government had complete assurance about the absence of political activity by the middle class, craftsmen, shopkeepers, and other urban social classes. The people, watched by the police and the security forces, did not have any opportunity to take part in politics. They had to devote all their efforts to earning enough to stay alive. They did not have a union of their own or an organization to defend their rights.

For example, a boy apprenticing to a dyeing shop at the age of ten would remain in the job until death. He had to make yellow, dark green, green, dark blue, gray, black, khaki, tan, red, and other kinds of dyes by combining different dyeing substances and weeds such as indigo, pomegranate skin, iron particles, walnut skin, lime, thumb berry, Arabic gum, and other substances and ingredients. Later, however, the increasing import of foreign dyes reduced the labor and gradually replaced the native dyeing industry in the country. A dyer, whose hands up to his elbows were indelibly dyed for life, had to work from dawn to dusk to feed his family. He had no saving, no time for fun, no political thought. The government never cared to improve his craft or help him even though it collected taxes from him.

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Other city craftsmen had a similar situation or even a worse one for others. For example, a shoemaker had a box containing a few needles, leather cutters, and lancets. He could not afford to rent a shop; therefore, he worked with his tools on city sidewalks and street corners. He slept on a corner of public or private market house or in the basements of houses in the city. If he had a wife and children, they had to serve the landlord. Similarly, goldsmiths, tailors, carpenters and masons, shoemakers, tin-makers, blacksmiths, copper-makers, and other craftsmen could not question the government policy. They did not have any union. The small merchants, shopkeepers, and minor government employees could not afford to suspend their shops and activities. If they did, they had to face arrests and temporary imprisonment, which caused disruption to their works and hunger to their families.

Therefore, a political campaign against a military-ethnic power was very difficult. Of course, the capitalists and merchants, with potential influence on social and political affairs, had their own reformist wishes, which included freedom of action and administrative reforms. However, they had to remain silent and obedient, facing the merciless will and power of the monarchy, as particularly the government soon began to support the investment, monopoly, and privilege of the brokering business of this class as partner in profit. Consequently, a number of important merchants and capitalists, with a number of landowners, stood by the side of the monarchy. So there was no place for an opposition view because the monarchy relied on four pillars: the military bureaucracy, the landowners, the hired clerics, and a number of major capitalists and merchants.

Thus, the monarchy was not facing any organized opposition throughout the country, except for some spontaneously sporadic uprising and resistance against the oppression, with the campaign of the Afghan intellectual and patriotic class against an unequal power. While the monarchy relied on its equipped army, the vast spying networks, the British-trained Indian spies, and the support of landowners-together with the British Empire, which was still holding the balance of world politics-the small Afghan intelligentsia, lacking both organization and experience, had no support inside the country or abroad. Neither could they, living under the shadow of the government daggers, establish the least possible contact with the farming class. Even in the capital, they could not establish an organized political party. The campaign was, therefore, restricted to individuals or small units. Highly patriotic and committed, they preferred sacrificial acts to succumbing to brutality, treason, and imperialism. This was an example of their patriotic and national revolutionary spirit.

This small group consisted of the urban middle class and small merchants, but the burden of its activities was upon the shoulders of the middle class youth and the city lower class. The government dealt with them by using cannons, rifles, bayonets, hangings, and dismal prisons, as well as tortures, which resembled those practiced in medieval times and in a police state. These brave combatants answered the

monarchy with fire and blood – an answer that finally forced the government to stop its excessive butchering of the patriots. Although the government continued its brutality for years, the mad killings of the people ceased. In other words, the government expanded its prisons instead of carrying out summary killings, with gradual death replacing violent killing.

It is worth noting that there were different groups within the opposition circle. Some reformist liberals and some modernist patriots were against the government's domestic and foreign policies, oppression, and colonialism. However, most of them did not have an intellectual insight. A number of inactive intellectuals believed that the present situation was bound to continue unchanged with the monarchy in power and the British imperialism in India. To them, the campaign was useless. A number of them waited until others would pave the ground for them to enter the scene. Advocates of this view were bound to gradually sink in the mire of opportunism, and the government took advantage of them. At the same time, a very small number of intellectuals put themselves at the service of the oppressive regime.

The Afghan campaign by the opposition began from the start of Nadir's rule when he unveiled his real face. The campaign moved in two parallel fronts: the external front revolved around former King Amanollah; the internal front consisted of urban middle class elements. Why did these bloody campaigns start? The regime by its own behavior was accelerating and intensifying them.

### **The Nadir Shah Regime and the Opposition**

After Nadir Shah stabilized his rule and began to implement his dangerous policy, the Afghan dissidents inside and outside the country started their campaign, offering sacrifices on this path. The campaign had to be by individuals or by small units because the monarchy had fortified with broad surveillance, dreadful prisons, and deceptive appearances. The campaign was not only against an oppressive monarchy but also against British imperialism and its intelligence service, which had dragged Asia into blood and grime.

The British Empire had determined not to give Afghanistan another opportunity to rise again. It tried to make it impossible for another progressive regime to emerge, in order that the new regressively subservient regime may rule the country for decades to come. Therefore, the regime put under surveillance almost every place and intellectual in the country. It also watched very closely the Afghan dissidents living abroad. This war declared by the imperialism and its henchmen against Afghanistan and the opposition intelligentsia was not only a political and military war; it was also a psychological, economic, and ideological war. To crush the opposition, it resorted to different means: surveillance, threat, imprisonment, torture, executions, elimination of family members, indoctrination, banishment,

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coercion, entrapment, perversion, vilification, true or false litigation, partnership in profit, etc. The war intended to uproot patriotism, national sentiment, and opposition to imperialism-to produce a new generation that could be molded in any desirable shape and to keep the masses in poverty, ignorance, and disunity so that all windows of change, progress, and hope may remain closed. To implement this long-term program, the government, by might and money, brought the people's property, life, and bread under its control, using both force and policing to achieve its aim.

The policing network, unprecedented in the country's history, was dreadfully extensive and organized. It had the support of a foreign intelligence agency, which was using Afghanistan for the benefit of its ultimate goals. All of the government's postal and transportation departments had been changed to spying networks. Spying offices had been established in the Palace, the Prime Ministry, the Interior Ministry, provincial governors' headquarters, security sections, and in the military. In this way, the government had placed under scrutiny all patriotic Afghans inside and abroad.

### **The Campaign from Abroad**

The Afghan opposition in Europe felt the need for establishing a political party against Nadir Shah. Obviously, as every party has to have a leadership body, former King Amanollah led the new party. Other members of the leadership were: Mahmud Tarzi, Gholam Nabi Charkhi in Turkey, Shoja ul-Daula, Gholam Sadiq Charkhi, Abdol Hadi Dawi in Berlin, Abdol Hosayn Aziz in Rome. Members of the party were Afghan students and a number of officials in Afghan embassies in Turkey, Europe, and elsewhere. The party drafted its constitution in Istanbul. A secret meeting in Switzerland made a number of approvals on the draft after the party members studied it in Berlin. Amanollah Khan and a number of the ousted and some functioning ambassadors were present at the meeting.

One of the ambassadors attending the meeting was Sardar Abdol Hosayn Aziz, Afghan ambassador to Rome. Later, members of the party discovered that this masquerading Sardar had secretly sent to Nadir Shah the party's resolutions, thus endangering the lives of the members. The government intelligence managed to obtain copies of all of the personal letters and documents of Gholam Nabi Charkhi, the Afghan ambassador to Ankara, and sent them to the Royal Secretariat in Kabul. The party's line of action and steps against the Nadir Shah regime were clearly shown in a number of letters that Amanollah, Shoja ul-Daula, and some Afghan students had sent to Charkhi. The purpose of the party was to overthrow Nadir Shah, establish a national government in Afghanistan, and open the path toward progress, modernization, freedom, and equality in the country. In this case,

Amanollah Khan had become the focus of their hopes. Of course, some imperialist agents had infiltrated the party.

The party had decided to financially support those members who resigned or were removed from their posts in the government. Not having a publication abroad, it was trying to establish contacts with the Afghan opposition inside and abroad, with some disgruntled government officials, and particularly with influential figures inside the country. The party letters, bearing the signatures of its important members, were smuggled into Afghanistan inside hollow canes. On one occasion, a detailed proclamation in several pages, bearing the signature of Amanollah Khan, was distributed in Afghanistan. Refuting the propaganda and accusations leveled against Amanollah, the proclamation detailed his aim for the progress of the country, while wisely admitting the past mistakes. It also depicted the true face of the regime. Nadir Shah accused three persons of having smuggled the proclamation inside the country. One of them was an Indian immigrant named Dawran Khan, who was arrested and executed in Balahesar-e Kabul. The proclamation shook the regime and added to its violence.

Faiz M. Zakriya, the foreign minister, volunteered to counter the proclamation by writing a book titled *Denial of the Rumors of the Ousted King*. The book was published in Dari and Urdu in Kabul in 1931. In his book, Faiz M. strongly condemned and accused the former king, whom he called the Great Amanollah before. Calling the Saqqao rebellion "the great revolution" (p.3), he praised Nadir Shah and his brothers. From page 15 on, he praised the Deoband religious school and the discipleship of the Afghan officers to the sheiks of the Indian Islamic madrasa. He also threatened Amanollah Khan with the publication of immoral photos-the same photos that foreign agents had forged and later spread in the frontier areas in Afghanistan to provoke an uprising against the former king. A fatwa by the Ulama of Afghanistan, without bearing their signatures, also appeared at the end of the book against the proclamation.

### **Gholam Nabi Charkhi**

The arrival of Charkhi in Kabul and his engagement in secret but bold activity was one of the practical measures taken by the party. The activity extended from Kabul to Lugar and Paktia. Charkhi was a famous Afghan figure. He was a man of influence in Paktia, Lugar, Balkh, Kabul, and he enjoyed in Nangarhar indirect influence through his father, Gholam Haidar Sepah Salar. The influence was making him bolder, while he, with his moves, was under the close watch of the government, and the monarchy was well aware of the details of his activities.

During the Saqqao rebellion, a youth named Abdol Hakim was an escort of Charkhi in Russia and in the provinces of Balkh and Maimana. He was privy to all

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of Charkhi's affairs. (Later, he became governor and minister in the new government.) The youth, who secretly belonged to the Afghan Anglophile group, was watching Charkhi's moves. Another person named M. Akbar Kateb, who occupied a secondary post in the new government, had monitored Charkhi in Ankara.

When Charkhi arrived in Kabul during the Nadir Shah rule, he came under the close watch of M. Safar Nuristani (later became an army general) and Abdollah Nayeab Salar (Mahyar Wardaki), who acted as Charkhi's close friend. Thus, the monarchy knew everything about Charkhi, about every step he was taking. Pretending to fear Charkhi, Nadir Shah made him bolder and more careless in order to discover his plans.

Finally, in the afternoon of November 7, 1932, a special royal automobile stopped at the door of Charkhi's house. Nadir Shah's military advisor, Gen. Seyyid Sharif Konari, came out of the car and announced the king's message: "His Majesty is sending you his greetings and inviting you for a walk in this fresh air. If you wish so, the king would be waiting for you."

Charkhi accepted the invitation without any hesitation since in the past Nadir Shah had often invited Charkhi for such walks outside the city. Charkhi headed toward the Delgosha Palace, accompanied by his brother, Gholam Jailani (former army general and ambassador), his cousins, Janbaz Nayeab Salar (who had saved Nadir Shah's life in the Shahmazar-e Lugar battle against Saqqao), and Gen. Shir Mohammad.

The king had prepared a plan and issued instructions. A guard unit stood outside the Delgosha Palace. The king was waiting in the Delgosha hall. With Charkhi stepping out of the car, the king began to come down. Charkhi and his companions stood waiting while facing the guard. The driver stopped the car near the steps and the king began to walk down. He parked it between Nadir Shah and Charkhi. The king stood by the car while Charkhi and his companions saluted him.

The king, ignoring the greeting, looked at Charkhi and said, "Okay, Gholam Nabi Khan, what has Afghanistan done to you to be its traitor?"

Charkhi replied, "Afghanistan knows who the traitor is."

At this moment, the king turned pale, his whole body was trembling. He had lost his good look since he acceded the throne. He had a frowning look, with a furrow between his eyebrows, as if his carnage, malice, and vengeance were now reflecting on his face. King Abdur Rahman had also a handsome face, but he changed to a frightening and ugly creature after committing all those atrocious acts during his reign. The contrast is noticeable in his pictures before and after his rule.

Nadir Shah heard his words and ordered the guards to beat him. The guards knocked him on the ground, beating him with their gun butts. Charkhi's brother and cousins, who were standing under the shadow of the guards' bayonets, were watching the tragic scene. He abruptly took out from his pocket a handkerchief and



thrust it into his mouth so that his screams would not come out under the strokes. Nadir Shah stood watching. He was trembling. Suddenly, he shouted, "Beat him to death!" Seyyid Sharif, the royal advisor, stepped forward and asked the guards to beat him with their gun barrels. The steel barrels vertically pierced his back and ribs, crushing all his bones. The killing lasted 18 minutes.

By the king's order, the beaten body, which looked like a mangled sack of meat, was carried to the Charkhi family. Then the king rode his car, heading for a recess toward Bagrami. According to Prince Ahmad Ali Durani, the king did not say a word on the way. As the body of Charkhi reached his house, men and women began to scream in mourning. The scene plunged the Andarabi neighborhood into a deep silence. Soldiers surrounded the house, arresting the family members. They carried Gholam Jailani Charkhi, Jan Baz Charkhi, and Shir M. Charkhi to the Arg prison.

The Charkhi family, which Fraser-Tytler in his book *Afghanistan* called wicked because its members resisted the British, had a much more tragic end. The government put in a special prison all members of the family, including women and children. The children grew in the prison, not knowing the outside world.

One day when a sheep, which a prison official had bought to slaughter as a sacrifice for Eid, ran away from him into the prison court, the family's younger daughter, who had not seen such a creature, screamed in terror. Since early childhood, the family children had not seen anything else other than the prison ground and the sky above it.

One year after the killing of Charkhi in 1933, the government hanged Shir M. Charkhi, Gholam Jailani Charkhi, with his sons – Gholam Rabbani and Gholam Mustafa – and Abdol Latif, son of Abdol Aziz Charkhi, Jan Baz, with his 14-year-old son, Yahya, died in prison. His other sons – Pir M. Charkhi, M. Alam Charki, Abdol Rahman Charkhi (child), Qader Charkhi (child), with the brothers of Jan Baz Charkhi (M. Omar Charkhi and M. Osman Charkhi) remained alive in prison.

This was the fate of the Charkhi family-a nationalist and liberationist family, which the British considered wicked and praised the ruling Nadir family. One relative of the Charkhi family, who did not go to prison and was embraced by the monarchy, was Gholam Safdar, son-in-law of Charkhi, who belonged to Etamadi family of the Mohammadzai clan and a descendant of Sardar Sultan M. Talayi.

### **Darikhil, with Waziri Support, Starts Uprising**

As soon as Charkhi arrived in Kabul, he established a secret contact with the Jadrani people in Paktia and expected them to rise in arm against the monarchy. He also expected the Waziri people, who were the fierce enemy of the British, to support the uprising. He calculated this would make Nadir deploy his forces in

Paktia, which would weaken the Kabul army. The uprising would spread throughout the country, preparing the vast disgruntled masses for a revolt, he thought. Then he would stage a coup in Kabul, overthrow the monarchy, and rebuild upon its ruins the Amanollah government.

In the first stage, sixty armed Darikhil tribesmen rose against the government. The monarchy, having become aware of the schemes, immediately dispatched Defense Minister Shah Mahmud, with a regular force, to Paktia. The *Islah* newspaper reported the news on October 28, 1932. A man named Lawani Faqir led the insurgency. Before launching his offensive, Shah Mahmud established his center in Gardiz, where he opened a path of negotiation with other tribes in the area by spending a massive amount of money. Within two months, by creating hostility and disunity among the Paktia people, he managed to win over to the government side against the Darikhil people a number of tribal chiefs from the Bibakhil, Mengzais, Ahmadzai, Mengali, Tutakhil, and Zurmati tribes.

Then the six-unit tribal force, along with the army, launched a four-pronged attack. As the *Islah* newspaper reported, the Darikhil women and children fled to mountains. Of the six hundred Darikhil tribesmen who took up arms, 120 of them, including Lawani Faqir, were captured and the rest of them were killed. The government forces, bombarding a 12-mile stretch of Darikhil land and villages, finished off the insurgents within three hours. It awarded the chiefs and mercenaries who supported the government forces in the battle. Shah Mahmud announced that the Darikhil people had colluded with Charkhi. One month after the incident, the rest of the Darikhil armed men, supported by the Waziri people, started a revolt from Khost. The government responded by all of its forces, with the artillery and the air force pushing the insurgents out of Khost.

Since then, the government escalated its divisive policy and intelligence activity in Paktia, leaving no place for resistance and tribal unity. Of course, tribal chiefs, landowners, and the new emerging nobility, who were all partners in profit with the government, were supporting the government policy. The Darikhil uprising had a great publicity repercussion in support of the rebels against the monarchy in Kabul. To frighten the people in the capital, the government ordered Sufi Gholam, a hotel owner in Kabul, and Abdollah Khan, a shopkeeper, with Sultan Mohammad, a new convert to Islam, to run before a cavalry in several provinces as a punishment for talking in favor of the uprising against the government. Later, they were imprisoned.

The hard lesson that the intelligent people of Paktia learned from the Darikhil and Waziri insurrection was that all that service a number of Paktia chiefs had rendered in overthrowing the Saqqao government and in suppressing their countrymen in Perwan, Kapisa, and Qataghan province toward stabilizing the Nadir Shah regime was nothing more than a means for achieving a goal. They also learned that the government wanted to pit them against themselves and against other

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Afghans. This new consciousness made the people of Paktia more careful and cautious toward the government.

It is worth noting that in the midst of these incidents the Ghaljayi people, led by Abdol Rahman Taraki, started a revolt against the government in 1930. The government put down the revolt by a force led by Allah Nawaz Hindustani, who forced Taraki to retreat and escape to India. A year later, Taraki returned to Afghanistan, but the government banished him to Balkh, where he lived until he died. A son named Gholam Mohayedini Margari, who later returned to Kabul, survived him.

### **The Opposition Continues the Campaign**

The execution of Charkhi broke the backbone of the party in Europe, disappointing a number of its leaders. However, Shoja ul-Daula from Germany and Gholam Mohayedini Arti from Turkey constantly called on Amanollah Khan and the party members to enter secretly from any possible route into western Afghanistan, where, with a rally of the disgruntled people around him in the area, the overthrow of the puppet regime would become easier. Amanollah Khan, who had already lost the strength of his heart, did not accept the proposal. The party remained in a stagnant state.

However, in 1938, five years after the assassination of Nadir Shah, the party resumed its operation by secretly sending from Syria Seyyid Sa'd al-Gailani (known as Pir Shami), to the Waziristan tribal area, where he launched an extensive campaign in favor of Amanollah Khan. An Afghan youth named Mir Abdol Aziz, a graduate of Turkey, also crossed into Paktia for the same purpose. The Waziri people, who considered Amanollah Khan a victor and a British adversary, rallied in support of him and Pir Shami. When the ruling Afghan government became aware of their activities, its foreign minister, Faiz M. Zakriya, informed the Indian government and requested the British intervention in the autonomous frontier issues.

In June 1938, Pir Shami issued a proclamation from the Kanikurrom, the center of Waziristan, in which he said, "Zaher Shah is a usurper of the Afghan throne and crown. We shall put King Amanollah on the Afghan throne." At this time, the Ghaljayi people, who revolted in 1937 against the government and its new financial regulation and escaped beyond the eastern border after their defeat, began to eagerly listen to the words of Pir Shami. In northern Waziristan, Faqir Ipi (known as Mirza Ali Khan) was still undecided. He was the same person who in 1937 began to campaign against British imperialism. He started his revolt when M. Amin Khan, brother of Amanollah Khan, returned from India to Waziristan in

1939 and tried to persuade a popular uprising in Kabul. Amin Khan failed and returned to India, while Faqir Ipi died in 1959.

With this atmosphere, Pir Shami, with an army of Waziri and Massoudi, marched along the country's eastern border. The move added to the concern of the Afghan and British governments, which feared a widespread uprising in case the government forces faced a defeat-but this did not happen. Just as the insurgent forces began their march, the British airplanes, before dropping bombs, flew over the area, dropping leaflets warning the frontier people against joining the insurgent forces. Similarly, the ground and air forces of the government were also battle ready against the frontier insurgency.

On the third day of their movement, the insurgent forces crossed the border into Afghanistan, confronting the forces of King Zaher Shah. A fierce battle started, with the insurgent forces fighting with their rifles against the heavy guns and air power of the government forces and the British air force. Of course, it was beyond the power of an insurgency to fight forces of two governments; therefore, it had to retreat. Once again, the British government saved the Zaher Shah monarchy. Later, the British, with conspiracy and politics, expelled Pir Shami from the frontier and dispersed the insurgent forces. According to Fraser-Tytler, the British claimed that they gave Pir Shami 20,000 British pounds and persuaded him to leave India. We do not know how close to reality this claim was.

### **Another Killing by Torture**

The government captured Mir Abdol Aziz and put him in a prison cell in Kabul. Locked in a dark lonely cell, he became mentally sick after a few months. With long nails and scruffy unshaved beard and head, he looked like a man out of the Stone Age. No prisoner and prison guard had permission to speak to him. One day, he imagined that Prime Minister Hashem Khan had called for him. Screaming at a prison guard, he ordered him to open the door for him, for he had to see Hashem Khan. The guard, making fun of him, refused to open the door. He kicked the door open, shouting in terror. He walked on the prison court with shackled feet and a chain on his neck. Other prisoners were watching the tragic scene from behind their cell windows. He was squealing like a hungry animal, repeating the name of the prime minister. The prison guards rushed in and held him tight, waiting for instructions from the warden. The warden rushed in, saw the scene, and went back to receive orders from a higher authority.

After a few moments, he returned and ordered the guards to beat the prisoner with their gun barrels. Mir Abdol Aziz, who had a hard time dying, was still repeating the name of the prime minister. The warden asked the guards to finish him off quickly. He ordered them to stand on his body and kick him to death. A

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simple-minded guard said, "Sir, he will die if we kick him hard." The warden replied, "This is what the order from the above says." In a few minutes, the thumping boots turned the body into a sack of mangled flesh. It was put on a stretcher and moved out of the prison. A prisoner, who was later released, remarked, "None of us could eat or drink that night after that crime took place before our eyes."

After the defeat of Pir Shami, with the Waziri and Massoudi forces, the party administrative body in Europe lost its morale and collapsed, relinquishing its campaign. In addition, some of the party leadership members by their political and self-interested acts harmed the prestige of the party in some European countries. They also discouraged and disbanded the young party members, such as the Afghan students and former Afghan officials.

Finally, Mahmud Tarzi in Istanbul, Shoja ul-Daula in Berlin, with Abdol Aziz Charkhi, Seyyid Qassem, and Mohammad Adib in other countries, hopelessly died abroad. A few others settled abroad permanently, such as Gholam Hassan Charkhi, Nasir Ahmad Abawi, Gholam Jailani, Mohammad Rahim Ghorbandi, Din Mohammad, Abdollah Naseri, Abdollah Shamsudin, and several others. Later, a number of other youths escaped from Kabul, such as M. Sharif Shurbazaari, Nadir Shah Paghmani, M. Rahim Shiwan, Dr. Nazamadin, Mirza Abdol Razaq, Abdol Baqi, Ahmad Rateb, and others, while Gholam Nabi Charkhi, with his brother, nephews, and cousins had been killed in Kabul and Din Mohammad, an Afghan student, died in the Arg prison.

Abdol Hadi Dawi, who had returned to Kabul, went to prison and remained there for many years. He put up with so much insult and offensive behavior by the hashish-smoking warden (Sarajadin Gardizi) that finally he lost his resistance and had to modify his political thought. Two other party members, Abdol Sabur Nasimi and Mohammad Hafiz, surrendered to the Afghan Embassy in Ankara. At that time, Faiz M. Zakriya was appointed Afghan ambassador to Turkey to monitor and neutralize the party activities. The two men, who divulged the party secrets to the embassy, returned to Kabul. Instead of rewarding them, the government banished them to Kandahar. Mohammad Hafiz, a man of clean character, regretted and cursed Abdol Sabur, accusing him of having betrayed the party. Eventually, Sabur became deputy minister of the Ministry of Information, but death quickly ended his fear and greed. When he became the editor of the *Islah* newspaper, he pointed his pen, like a dagger, into the hearts of the young Afghan dissidents.

At the end of World War II, Gholam Sediq Charkhi received an Afghan passport from Allah Nawaz Multani, Afghan ambassador to Berlin, who was monitoring the warring Germany for the British, just as Zulfakar Khan Hindi, Afghan ambassador to Tokyo, was doing the same thing.

Three years after World War II, King Amanollah, as the axis of the youth resistance and the magnet of Afghan public and intellectuals, was so devastated by

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domestic and foreign propaganda schemes, political indoctrination, and economic pressure that not only he refused to make any move toward returning to Afghanistan-when there was a good opportunity after the British left India and the Afghan regime was left alone amid public resentment and when there was a change in the balance of power in the post-war international politics-but he also sent his pledge of allegiance to King Zaher Shah on October 26, 1948:

*"Today, as a political, revolutionary, and economic crisis is underway in the world, particularly in the East, I do not wish the malevolent and sedition-seekers exploit my being away from Your Majesty and (my) becoming a hampering rock on our country's path toward progress and civilization.*

*As I hear your Majesty is taking steps toward progress and modernization, may God be with you and your companions! My prayer from the sacred Mecca and the brilliant Medina and everywhere else is this: Oh God, protect Afghanistan and its independence-oh Allah, oh King of the Kingdom! Since the Afghan nation is living in peace and tranquility under your shadow, I am also a member of it and from that blood. Therefore, I sent this letter of allegiance to Your Majesty and I pledge to be your loyal friend. I have no desire to be king.... God empowers whom he wills and weakens whom he wills... May God keep your monarchy straight so that you may render good services on the path of the freedom of the Afghan people, the protection of their independence and honor, and under the divine ordinance consult with them... and lead Islamic justice and democracy to the highest point of progress.*

*Your Majesty and I are from one family and blood, particularly your great father, my dear brother, His Majesty the Martyred Nadir Shah, during the time of His Majesty the Martyred Habibollah Khan, my great father, as well as during my time, we were close friends and we showed loyalty to our friendship. During the early time of your monarchy, I had also sent a telegraph. Before this, I had pointed out to your uncle, my dear brother, His Highness Shah Wali Khan and your ambassador in Rome, that we should not be separate from one another. The only desire of this person, as a member of your nation, is peace and progress for dear Afghanistan, and I wish for its welfare from the Divine and the success of Your Majesty!"*

These events demonstrated the British power and precision of prediction in the East-a demonstration of how it could make its puppet regime last and become hereditary and how it could eliminate its patriotic opposition physically and morally. After it left India, Britain created in Afghanistan a political vacuum, which put the Nadir Shah regime in a critical state.

At this juncture Shoja ul-Daula died in mysterious way in Berlin. (His escort was a British woman, who did not leave him alone for a moment in London and Germany.) And Amanollah Khan was made to surrender to the enemy. Anyhow, the official *Islah* newspaper, quoting from the letter, wrote this on November 18, 1948:

*"... Yesterday the councils discussed the letter of the ousted king, Amanollah Khan, which, as a letter of allegiance, had reached the presence of His Majesty the King. In the*

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*letter, he (Amanollah Khan) had appealed for mercy and stated that since he was an Afghan and still recognized as an Afghan, he should be granted the Afghan citizenship identity by the government of His Majesty. After a series of debates and statements against him because he was ousted by the nation, it was decided that according to Islamic terms and Afghan traditions, to which His Majesty the King by his special royal grace agreed, his request was accepted and the Afghan citizenship identity would be granted to him."*

With this sad and painful game, the party of the Afghan patriotic dissidents abroad collapsed. In return for his sacrifices, Amanollah Khan was now granted the right to be an Afghan citizen. (He was presented) as if he had committed an act of treason and a crime against his nation and the country by declaring its independence and opening a path toward change and progress. But now he received an amnesty from Zaher Shah, while dozens of British mercenaries, such as Allah Nawaz Multani, Shahji Punjabi, and others, who were being treated as natives of Afghanistan, were at the helm of the country's affairs.

## **The Campaign Inside**

Since its establishment, the Nadir Shah monarchy viewed the opposition intellectual class as the enemy to the faith and the state, without any restraint in hostile propaganda, accusations, and slanders against its members. The government constantly pursued and abused them, and the ruling family depicted them as the cause of promoting apostasy, heresy, sabotage, and sedition, thus provoking against them the clerical and feudal class.

Nadir Shah himself said, "Among the millions of Afghans, the existence of a few hundred educated youths has no significance." For this reason, he wanted to change them to soulless and bloodthirsty traitors. To achieve his goal, he threatened them with expulsion from schools and works, stigmatized them by publicity, and ostracized them from society by policing them. He sought to recruit some of them by giving them cash and positions. Anyone who did not accept the offer faced suppression, and if he persisted in his opposition, he would find himself under the gallows. In addition, the government expelled their children from schools and their dependents from their jobs, while ostracizing them from society as national traitors, so that they might perish in isolation from poverty, fear, and suffering.

The government also attempted to offend the families of those imprisoned by fabricating legal cases against them. Even reputable families-such as the Charkhi family and Wali Khan family-faced slanders by spying women who falsely claimed to be related to them. Another policy that the monarchy pursued was that it sought to strip national liberationist figures of their pride and honor by first imposing on them various kinds of physical and spiritual pains and then disfiguring them in society by involving them in its own games and the government. If the government failed in such efforts, it hired an individual (brother, son, a relative or even a friend of the figure) to harm the name of the person, or his family, or the circle with which he was associated.

When this writer in 1930 resigned from the Afghan Embassy secretariat in Germany and returned to Kabul to take part in the campaign against the tyrannical regime, Kabul Governor Abdol Ahad Mahyar Wardaki interrogated me. (At this time, a number of dissidents were returning to the country according to a collective agreement to fulfill their duty in the life-and-death campaign against the regime.) In the interrogation, as a document against me, he put before me a long list of names. He questioned me why I was seeing such persons. The governor pointed out that if I wanted to live, I had to stop seeing these and other people. In this way, the government wanted to imprison persons in themselves, in their own houses. Several months later, Nadir Shah summoned me, as a member of Kabul Literary Association, at the Arg Gol Khana.

He was sitting alone in the hall, wearing a karakul hat. (At that time, members of the ruling family would not sit bareheaded.) After a moment of silence, he began



to talk. From behind his spectacles, he fixed his cold brutal eyes at me, saying: *"I want Afghanistan in a state of security, as I had once put my family on the line for the liberation of the country from the brutality of the Saqqaoi villains. In the future, I will not refrain from taking any necessary steps for the peace and security of Afghanistan. All the ethnic groups and the tribes, with mullas and khans are backing the government. However, some inexperienced youths have put themselves in danger by having become instruments of the interests of this and that. I want to correct them and save them from danger. For this reason, I have chosen you to cooperate with us."*

Although I knew that a negative response to this powerful malicious man meant suicide, I said, "As a writer, I am a member of the literary association and I know how to perform my duty as much as I can in writing and explaining the history of the people of Afghanistan, but to refrain from engagements outside my national duty. Therefore, I cannot..." Without letting me finish my words, the king said, *"Enough, enough, Gholam Mohammad Khan."* He uttered the sentence with a temper and slightly pushed back his hat from his forehead.

I felt that Nadir Shah was growing quite angry from his defeat by an ordinary man whose life was in his hand. When I was the secretary of the Afghan Embassy in Paris and he was ambassador, I had realized that he was a sensitive, hot-tempered, and spiteful man. However, politically he pretended to be a man of tolerance and modesty. I knew that he had decided to eliminate me, with my family members. He dismissed me with a word. When I left the hall, I found Mirza Nowroz, the chief secretary, and Abdol Ghani, the Arg security chief, waiting behind the door. I passed by them. When I arrived home, I reviewed my history notes and left some of it with pictures in the hands of reliable persons.

A few days later, Nadir Khan summoned Khaja Hedayetollah, who was a patriotic person and discussed with him the same matter. Khaja pretended to accept the responsibility assigned to him by the king and began to fulfill it. The king gave him a garden and a fortress-like house in Dar ul-Aman. He held open meetings of youths and expressed his views about the government's betrayals, its compromise with the British, and even about a secret treaty that Shah Wali Khan had signed with the British. He talked about the need for the youths to become politically active against the regime. The government through its spies was monitoring his words and activities. In Hazarajat, he had supported King Amanollah, and when he was at Afghan General Consulate in Delhi, he was involved against the Nadir Shah regime, but now he had apparently fallen in a government trap. Soon the government arrested him, confiscated his assets, and hanged him at the Dehmazang Square in September 1933. The government banished Khaja's relatives to Kandahar and imprisoned his former secretary, Mirza Hassan Ali Khan.

At any rate, the Afghan opposition campaign started in two parallel fronts. Outside the country, because of the existence of a relatively bigger and freer party, the Afghan dissidents were divided into four groups: the first group remained with

the party, while the second group remained outside the party and acted independently even though it was still interested in Amanollah Khan and the party. Among the members of the second group were M. Omar Khan known as Daraz (Tall), Mir Abdol Rashid Begham, Seyyid Kamal Khan, Din M. Khan, Abdollah Khan Naseri (the last two persons died in Germany) and a few others. Members of the third group were protégés of the new ruling family, who later returned to Kabul and each received a post and position, such as Professor Anwar Ali of Indian origin, M. Atiq Khan Mohammadzai (became minister of agriculture and a big landowner), and a few others. Members of the fourth group were impartial, such as Abdol Ghani Khan, Mahmud Khan, Mir Ahmad Khan, Abdollah Shamsoddin, Abdollah Khan Tarzi, Ali Gol and few others.

The activity of the first group or the party was mentioned before. As for the second group, each member opposed the monarchy in his own way. Two members of the group took serious steps against the regime, resulting in the assassination of the king's brother, M. Aziz Khan, the Afghan ambassador to Berlin.

### **Assassination of Nadir Shah's Brother**

Two Afghan students from Kabul wanted to assassinate Nadir's brother in Berlin. One was a student in Berlin. The other one was Seyyid Kamal, who belonged to a poor coppersmith family. After graduation, he worked at a factory in Magdeberg. He was a man of medium height, with a white complexion showing a few small pox marks on his face. He was more than 30 years old. He was calm in nature. He had a German fiancé by the name of Herta. In Berlin, he visited his Kabuli friend. Both of them were opposed to the British influence in Afghanistan under the mask of the Nadir Shah family. They believed that the regime's regressive and tyrannical behavior was responsible for causing the destruction of the country. Therefore, they decided to perform their national and human duties in the campaign against foreign colonialism and internal regression. They lived in poverty, feeding on cauliflower, which cost them 50 pfennige. While cooking and eating the vegetable, they discussed their plan.

Finally, they reached this conclusion: Since the ruling Afghan monarchy was a puppet of the British and since the British government believed that the Afghan people were ignorant of all this, it was therefore imperative for the Afghan youths to make the British understand that the Afghan people knew that their real enemy was returning under another mask. To send this signal to the British, they decided to beat the horse in order to frighten the rider, as the proverb goes. In this case, the horse was the Afghan monarchy and its rider was the British government. For the time being, they had access to a member of the royal family in Berlin.

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Sardar Mohammad Aziz Khan (father of Mohammad Daud), the elder brother of Nadir Shah, was Afghan ambassador to Berlin. He was a snobbish and arrogant courtier, with little literacy. He was in charge of the Afghan students in Paris during the reign of King Amanollah. Most of the students resented his behavior. He always blamed the Ministry of Education for sending children of the pauper and the poor or the middle class families to Europe to study. In his opinion, education abroad had to be restricted to children of the court and the nobility, particularly in the fields of law, administration, and government. With this mentality, his mistreatment of the Afghan students abroad was obvious after Nadir Shah came to power. During the early days of the Nadir Shah rule, Sardar M. Aziz, went to Moscow as ambassador to preserve the diplomatic appearances with the Soviet Union.

His other brother, Shah Wali Khan, became ambassador to London to be in direct contact with the British government. In order to defuse the activities of the Afghan dissidents in Europe, which had just started, Shah Wali Khan and M. Aziz Khan were respectively appointed as Afghan ambassadors to Paris and Berlin. Of course, their positions in London and Moscow were given to two other Mohammadzais: Ahmad Ali and Abdol Hosayn Aziz.

Except the Mohammadzai and the Indian students, M. Aziz in Berlin treated harshly other ordinary Afghan students. In his conversations, he openly supported the internal tyranny and British imperialism. He opposed progress, change, and revolution. His advisors were two students, M. Atiq Rafiq (a Mohammadzai) and Anwar Ali Khan of Indian origin, who protected him and helped him in the embassy affairs.

Seyyid Kamal and his friend decided to assassinate the ambassador at the embassy, surrender to the German police, and then declare in the police interrogation their action as an Afghan protest against the expansion of the British influence in Afghanistan through the ruling regime. By this action, they intended to publicize their slogan in the European press.

As for who should carry out the assassination, each one wanted to undertake the task, which they agreed one person should carry out. Since Seyyid Kamal had a fiancé, his Kabuli friend argued that he should carry out the act because he was not married. Seyyid Kamal, however, turned down his friend's offer by appealing to his friend: "Don't you want me to acquire a little honor in the service to our country?" Finally, they decided to settle the dispute by lottery. They wrote their names on two pieces of paper, shuffled them, and put them on a table. On the first paper drawn was the name of Seyyid Kamal. He kissed his friend as a farewell and took up his pistol.

On June (16 juza) 1932, he stood opposite the Afghan Embassy. He approached the embassy, rang the doorbell, and the German guard asked him to wait in the lounge. He had to wait for a while. As usual, Nadir Shah's ambassadors

ignored the Afghan students abroad and treated them harshly, while King Amanollah's ambassadors had established with them a father-son relationship.

The ambassador was on the top floor, talking with Atiq Rafiq and Anwar Ali. Seyyid Kamal was standing across the steps on the embassy lower floor. After an hour, the ambassador, accompanied by his advisors, came out of his room. Kamal watched him coming down the steps. He was wearing a dark suit, with a shining diamond ring on his finger and a diamond bezel on his necktie. Walking behind him were Atiq Khan and Anwar Ali. Seyyid Kamal waited until the ambassador reached half way down the steps. He aimed at his chest. The second bullet pierced his chest and passed through his shoulder, hitting Atiq Khan's shoulder. In this way, the first ruling family member lost his life, with all his pomp and glory.

Seyyid Kamal laid down his pistol, waiting for the police to come. The telephone started ringing, and soon the police and doctors arrived in. He was taken to a prison, where he remained for several months. His German fiancé and an attorney tried to persuade him to explain to the court that his action had resulted from mistreatment by the ambassador or from hunger and debt. This would save him from execution or reduce his imprisonment for life to seven years, and eventually he would be free, she told him. He did not say anything before his tearful and pleading fiancé until the trial day.

At the trial, in contrast to what his defense attorney wished him to say, he stood up and said, *"The existing monarchy in Afghanistan, a member of which was Ambassador Mohammad Aziz Khan, is ruling under the influence of the British government, which is ruining the country. As an Afghan national, I killed him intentionally to show to the world the resentment of the Afghan people against the monarchy and the British influence in Afghanistan."*

The British ambassador to Afghanistan, Fraser-Tyler, in his book wrote: "... in June (1932) Sardar Mohammad Aziz, brother of the King and Afghan Minister in Berlin, was assassinated by an Afghan student as he left his house. The murderer announced that his action was intended as a protest against the predominance of British influence in Afghanistan...." (p.240).

The government in Kabul and its representatives in Berlin urged the German Embassy and the German Foreign Ministry to execute Seyyid Kamal, otherwise, they argued, no Afghan ambassador would be safe in Europe. If he is not to be executed, the Afghan government will sever its diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations with Germany and will expel German employees from Afghanistan. Atiq and Anwar Ali, with whom Allah Nawaz was in contact, carried much of the activity, which aimed at executing Seyyid Kamal, at the German Foreign Ministry. They were afraid of life sentence for Kamal instead of death sentence.

Finally, Seyyid Kamal was condemned to death. He was taken to a special room, where a representative of Afghan Embassy was also present as an observer. He was Mr. Alef Khan, an Afghan who lived beyond the northwest frontier. During

World War II, when he served the Indian British, he was captured as a war prisoner in Germany, where he remained for a long time. Later he married a German woman and worked as a translator for the Afghan Embassy in Berlin. Then he returned to Kabul, where he lived for several years before the writing of this book.

In this room, Seyyid Kamal faced a Christian priest, who had come to perform the confession ritual, but he refused to accept it because he said he was not a Christian. He also refused to cover his eyes with a handkerchief. Then he took off his shirt and entered the execution room with his pants. After a few minutes, the execution was carried out in a usual German way. History will not forget the name of this revolutionary Afghan.

His uncle was old and deaf, but he was still working as a coppersmith in his humble shop in Kabul. He was pounding his hammer, unaware of the world around him. Suddenly, armed policemen burst into his shop and tied the hands of this innocent man. He kept asking them: "What is going on?" With a great deal of difficulty, the policemen made him understand that the security commandant had summoned him. He had lost much of his hearing and could not hear ordinary sounds. They took him away. Soon he found himself standing under the hanging rope, not in the commandant office. He begged them to give him water to perform ablution. He prayed twice. The word "Islam" was still coming from his mouth when they tightened the rope around his neck. Moments later, his body was hanging from the rope. In the evening, his wife and children silently mourned his death.

In spite of all these risks taken by the Afghan revolutionaries abroad, the danger and burden of the campaign lay upon the shoulders of the opposition inside. For this small and disorganized group, which lacked facilities for an organized campaign, was under the direct blows of the regime and British surveillance. It had not yet gained any experience and knowledge about the British colonialist schemes, strategies, and about the monarchy's deceptive conspiracies. Therefore, like a naked champion, they entered the field to wage a man-to-man battle against the well-armed enemy.

### **Variety of Campaigns by Dissidents**

The focal point of the campaign by the Afghan dissidents was Kabul, where the opposition group was much more aware of the regime's politics of duplicity and brutality and of the British interference and influence through its agents on the country's domestic and foreign affairs. At first, members of the group became engaged in publicity and disclosure of the monarchy's aims and actions, explaining the nature of the ruling family and the British hostile policy, with the country facing

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an unpleasant future. Then they started spreading verse and prose night letters in the country.

Of course, some of the publications that passed from hand to hand contained biting satires against members of the royal family, which provoked their personal and irreconcilable hostility against the opposition and added to the old political enmity.

To the government not only the writing of such materials but also reading them even at home was a national crime, and the suspected reader would receive painful incarceration. For example, Seyyid Sa'dadin Baha received a stick beating three times for reading a poem. One time he was tortured with hot iron balls put under his armpits, and he faced a 13-year prison term. He grew old and sick, not living very long after his release.

A strange feature of this type of publicity campaign or "the cold guerilla warfare" was that the campaign and the campaigners did not have a definite or general center, such as an open or secret organized part, which could plan a campaign and define missions for its members. For the extensive spying networks and conspiracies by the monarchy had spread so much suspicion in the minds of the opposition that not only public gatherings or organizations had become impossible, but also, as a result of false rumors, all of the opposition circles viewed one another with suspicion and even hostility. From the conspiracy and spying, the government had gained experience and skill in causing suspicion and mistrust among the opposition members, who often refrained from getting close together and becoming united. They suspected one another to have a connection with the monarchy. Therefore, the only campaign that the opposition could undertake had to be either individual or limited to a small circle of a few persons. Nevertheless, all of these individuals and circles moved toward one direction. At times, they would notice that those they suspected to be in contact with the monarchy had been in prison cells or sent to the gallows before them. Then they would regret their suspicion.

Though, this suspicion and disunity among the dissidents hindered an ultimate victory over the foreign colonialism and the domestic regression, it did result in a general crackdown and loss of hope for the opposition. However, for many years the campaign kept the monarchy and the imperialism engaged in putting almost every individual dissident under surveillance instead of a single party. To the regime, which banned all open and legal opposition activities, leaving no opening for the steam to come out of this boiling pot, everybody was seen as a potential enemy. This suppression would obviously end in an explosive outburst, which may also destroy the pot.

Of course, the imperialist policy had no need for such thought, relying heavily on force and fraud. This belligerent policy, with the power of the sword and poverty, demanded a crushing of the popular resistance forces. Then it wanted to make them believe in their defeat and weakness and finally subdue them with cash

and bread. The future intended product would be a generation without a patriotic, sacrificial, and manly spirit—a generation enslaved to money and might.

At any rate, the campaign was not restricted to oral and written publicity. Some of the dissidents established contacts with their colleagues abroad, particularly with Amanollah Khan. A group of them changed the publication *Afghanistan* into a campaign tool against the regime. An Afghan Indian, Mortaza Ahmad Khan, published it in Dari during the rebellion in Afghanistan. It defended the territorial integrity and independence of Afghanistan against claims over the issue of Herat by some Iranian newspapers. The publication received a warm welcome by Afghan intellectuals inside, who could not have their own mouthpiece or publication inside the country. However, after the rebellion subsided and Nadir Shah proclaimed his monarchy, this incredulous publication began to support the monarchy. The new shift in direction caused resentment among the Afghan dissidents, who were burning in the fire of the regime's regression and tyranny.

Later, however, a number of Afghan youths crossed the border and went to Delhi, where they held several private meetings with Mortaza Ahmad through Khaja Hedayetollah, the Afghan general consul. As a result, the publication changed its policy and began to publish articles against the new monarchy in Afghanistan. Sometimes, youths from inside and abroad wrote articles for the paper, one of which by this writer under the pseudonym S.B. was published in 1930. The title of the article was: "Hear the Tragedy of the Promise of the Rose from Naziri / the Nightingale Tells the Story More Plaintively." The article detailed the nature of the ruling family and the influence of some court Indians, with the program of purging Afghan dissidents, the smuggling of wealth, and the country's future under the shadow of the tyrannical and colonial regime.

Obviously, the publication did not benefit the monarchy and the British; therefore, upon the request of the Afghan Foreign Ministry, the Indian British government banned the paper and imprisoned its publisher. In its own special way, however, the British government conditioned Ahmad Khan's release to the approval of the Afghan government. Under pressure, he had to apologize in a letter to Nadir Shah for not being aware of the situation inside Afghanistan. He sent the letter to Nadir Shah, imploring the king's agreement to his release. The king sent it to Kabul Literary Association in order to warn the Afghan writers about the situation of the opposition inside and abroad. Before the paper suspension and his imprisonment, the Afghan government had embarked upon another clever and skillful initiative:

It assigned Prince Ahmad Ali Durani Lahori, director of the association, to hire a person in Lahore to act as a janitor for the publisher. For a very nominal wage, first he was supposed to win the publisher's trust by hard and honest work. His real mission was to steal the mailbox that contained the letters addressed to the publisher from inside and outside India. For a reward of 2000 rupees, he stole the box and delivered it to the prince. The mission was easily executed, as the prince later

bragged that the mailbox arrived in Kabul in tact and was opened and read at the Arg. He said the Afghan government identified all of the writers, who had written against the government, by their hand-written articles or the writing on the envelopes except for those who sent typewritten articles without their signatures

The monarchy, through its extensive spying offices in cooperation with the Indian British intelligence, was in full control of the opposition inside and abroad. In Kabul, the Seyyid Abdollah Shahji's house had become a spying center. Even Sardar Omar Khan, son of Amir Abdur Rahman, had to attend the Shahji meeting every day and present his daily report. The monarchy had a blacklist of all dissidents, who were under close watch, treating each one in a particular way. It entrapped some to immobilize them, while it threatened, deposed, imprisoned, or banished others. Every dissident or opposition group came under direct government watch. The surveillance had reached the point that a spy would indirectly introduce himself to a target individual or group so that he would not face rejection.

This was not all. In order to identify the less known opposition figures, the government published against itself an underground paper called Haqiqat (Truth). A government agent named Nik M. Kabuli known as Mirza Niko, a scrupulous, witty, rational, and attractive youth, was in charge of the paper. Several years ago, with his friends-Mirza Abdol Ali Jan, Mirza Abdollah, Haji Wali M. Mokhles, Mir Ali Ahmad, and some others-Mirza Niko was active against the Amanollah regime. They besieged the headquarters of Kandahar Tanzimia President Abdol Aziz Khan, who was also the interior minister. For no known reason, this person escorted me (this writer) on his way from Kandahar to India when returning to Afghanistan in 1924 from my post at the Amania Government Company in Moscow. The following day when I crossed the Durand-Line, I noticed that Mirza Niko had no problem crossing the border and accompanying me to the Afghan Trade Agency in Chaman, whose Afghan representative was Gholam Faruq Kandahari known as Kako.

I faced the same incident in Lahore. The moment I stepped out of the train, I faced a youth by the name of M. Ali Khan, who did not leave me for 48 hours until I left for Peshawar. He was later known as professor M. Ali Khan, who wrote on history in Kabul. During the early reign of Nadir Shah, he was quite active in favor of the regime. He turned Kabul Public Garden into a gathering of youths, who were encouraged to make speeches. Of course, he had every speech recorded to deal with anti-government speakers. One of the speakers, Mir Habibollah, a graduate in telegraph, spent 14 years in prison for making a genuinely critical speech. The day he walked out of the prison, he was an old and broken man.

Despite Mr. Niko's efforts, the youths in Kabul did not join the Truth paper. Instead, they published a paper called *The Truth of the Truth*, which attacked the monarchy from its foundation. Finally, however, Mirza Niko succeeded to trap a number of writers, identify them, and introduce them to the government. Among



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them were Martyr Mir Aziz, the Martyr Mir Masjedii, and others. The monarchy was frantically attacking from every direction. The prisons of Arg, Kabul security, Dehmazang, Saraye Muti, and Saraye Badam were full of political prisoners. (The Saraye Badam prison was for the women and children of the Charkhi family.) The prisoners' families, with empty stomachs, spent their nights crying by kerosene lights. Women waited behind prison gates, begging the guards to pass over to their men the food they brought from home.

Up to now, scores of men were killed, or had died in prisons, with several of them having become insane because of prison pressure, such as Seyyid Ahmad Nayeab Salar and Major Gen. Azam Khan in Arg prison, and M. Kabir Actor and M. Yusof Haqiqi in Saraye Muti prison.

The following are a number of those killed: Pinen Beg, Dost Mohammad, Ahmad Shah, Seyyid Ahmad, Gholam Jailani Charkhi, Shir M. Charkhi, Amroddin, Abdol Latif, Mohammad Naim, Abdol Rahman Ludi, Faiz M. Barutsaz, Taj M. Paghmani, Gholam Nabi Charkhi, Gholam Rabbani Charkhi, Gholam Mustafa Charkhi, M. Walikhan, Mirza M. Mahdi Qazelbash, Faqir Ahmad, Ali Akbar Khan, Khaja Hedayetollah, Mawladad Hazara, Khodadad Hazara, M. Azim Monshizadeh, Dowran Khan, and many others. (Military titles omitted in translation).

Subsequently, the following were killed: Mohammad Zaman (a student of Nejat High School), Mohammad Ayub (assistant principal of Nejat High School), Abdol Latif Charkhi, Qorban Hazara, Mahmud Khan I, Mahmud Khan II (student), Mohammad Zaman (clerk from the Electric Company), Mir Aziz, Mir Masjedii, Abdol Hakim Rostaqi (writer), Mirza Mohammad, Amir Mohammad, Mir Abdol Aziz (graduate of Turkey), and others. Someday a writer may publish a complete list of all those killed and imprisoned by the Nadir Shah regime.

The following are the names of some of those who died in the regime prisons: Mohammad Sa'id (nephew of M. Wali Khan), Janbaz Nayeab Salar Charkhi, Mohammad Ismail, son of Nazer M. Safar, Mohammad Aziz Ghorbandi (brother of Shoja Daula), Din Mohammad (graduate of France), Seyyid Gholam Haider Konari, Bashir Monshizadeh, Mirza Abdollah Mansuri, M. Ebrahim Qarizadeh, Azam Khaja (president of the Electric Company), Khaja Mir Alam, Mirza Shirin Charkhi, Yahya Charkhi (14- year-old boy), Mohayedin Anis (journalist and writer), Mohammad Amin (ambassador and nephew of Mohammad Wali Khan), Shir Mohammad (electric engineer), Mohammad Karim Monshizadeh (telephone expert), Abdol Fattah Telegraphi, Masjedi Hazara, and others.

However, a complete list of the political prisoners is not available. There were 70 political prisoners in my prison. A large number of prisoners were in the Arg prison. Many others were in the Dehmazang and Kutwali prisons. When there is a mention of the political prisoners and prisons in the Nadir Shah regime, the reader should not think of them in terms of other prisoners and prisons in the world or

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even in the East. Here is a small picture of a political prison and its prisoners according to my observation during the Nadir Shah reign:

## **Political Prisoners and Prisons**

### **Saraye Muti Prison**

In the summer of 1933, I was a member of Kabul Literary Association. I was engaged in writing articles and historical essays on the history of Afghanistan. The general history of Afghanistan was still unwritten, and all that was in writing covered only the beginning of the Merwais Hutaki and the Abdali state. With little background, I began to write the contents of the country's general history by publishing in Kabul *Salnameh* (Year-Book) magazine such articles as "Afghanistan, and a View of Its Heritage," "Afghans in India" and "A Brief History of Afghanistan." In addition to my lack of expertise in the field of history, which affected these writings, another major flaw came from the demand of the existing dark political and administrative atmosphere in the country. The atmosphere prevented the writer from writing what he knew and wished to express freely. The monarchy had built an iron wall against the thoughts and actions of the writers. Therefore, for more than 30 years, my writings suffered from the same flaw-such as *Afghanistan in a Glimpse*, *Arab and Islam in Afghanistan*, *Ahmad Shah Abdali*, *Literature during the Mohammadzai Era*, *Local Rulers of Afghanistan*, etc

In addition, without my permission, the government censored or tampered with my writings. My only work that remained uncensored was the first volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History*, which the government banned it. Therefore, under the political circumstances of the time, I considered my writings, despite being flawed and incomplete, a step toward progress. I presented to the Afghan opposition intellectuals, at least, some materials about the long history of the country and helped them move forward with an understanding of the course of history.

At any rate, in the afternoon of September 13, 1933, in the wake of the attack on the British Embassy in Kabul by M. Azim Monshizadeh, two armed policemen entered the Kabul Literary Association and arrested me. They carried a note, with the signature of Torah Baz Khan, Kabul security commandant, which said:

"Be present at the commandant office. You will be asked a few questions and then released." The policemen took me toward Derwaza-e Lahori. As I approached Kotwali, a police ordered me to go directly to Darwaza-e Lahori, where the Kotwali commandant was waiting for me and other persons. Suddenly I felt that from there they will take me to the hanging place in Balahezar, as they used to do before. For a few minutes, this feeling struck me like a lightning. When a police put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Get in here," I found myself in the middle of Bazaar Saraji while entering a house called Saraye Muti.

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The house had a rectangular court, enclosed by a two-floor structure of forty small rooms opening onto the open halls, which served as balconies for the rooms. This old and ramshackle house looked like an animal den. The courtyard and the balconies were full of armed and club-holding policemen, who kept bringing in new victims all day long. There was a soldier standing in front of each room.

The police officers inspected me twice, took away my pen, paper, and watch, and then pushed me into a room. Later, a new group of police officers and soldiers, led by Commandant Torah Baz and Intelligence Chief Mirza M. Shah, entered the prison. One member of the group in a loud voice accused the prisoners of being traitors to the faith and the state. Since the weather was hot, the commandant and the intelligence chief sat on the house roof.

At this time, bags of chains were brought in and thrown on the courtyard. A blacksmith appeared to bind the newly arrived prisoners. Since the prisoners had suits, he had to put the iron chains on their pants. His name was Abdol Salaam, and he quietly told me: "It would have been better if you had not had your pants. You will find it difficult to take them off."

The rooms were dark, without any light. The house was a daytime school before it was converted into a prison. On the courtyard center stood a post, with a light bulb hanging from it. Among the new prisoners was Mabud Khan, a graduate of Germany. He was thrown by the post, where he was to be chained. When he saw the wooden post, he thought it was a hanging post for hanging him. Immediately he stood up and turned his face in the direction of Mecca, saying his prayer. A soldier told him it was not a hanging place. He prayed another time to thank God.

In the evening, the commandant and the intelligence chief walked on the balcony to inspect the rooms from outside. Then the commandant told two units of soldiers from the Arg and Kabul security to lock the rooms and prevent the prisoners from talking to one another. "Beat them with your bayonets, if they talk to one another," they commanded. After they left the prison, the soldiers began to disperse, guarding different parts of the prison. The soldiers shifted places constantly so that they would not develop friendship with the prisoners. Then from beyond the Durand Line a unit of apparently experienced soldiers arrived to guard the prison. The British government dismissed two battalions from the Quetta army units-which were from the same army that the British had formed from the children of those who had defected from and persecuted by King Abdur Rahman-and sent them to Kabul. Nadir Shah divided them among the Kabul army units, utilizing their military services. The new soldiers who arrived in the prison were from the same battalions.

At any rate, the prisoners squatted on bare floors. They had to wait for floor covers and beds to come from their homes. This first group of prisoners consisted of more than thirty opposition figures, including writers, military officers, clerks, telegraph experts, translators, foreign ministry officials, teachers, hotel owners,

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Indian immigrants, etc. In less than two months, a second group of more than thirty persons arrived, including teachers, officials and clerks from the Foreign Ministry, and other employees. Nadir Shah had decided to execute all of the prisoners in Saraye Muti, but a bullet from the pistol of a youth killed him sooner.

Sometimes, several new prisoners arrived in the prison and then, after a while, they would be moved to another place. The prisoners faced a great deal of psychological pressure—a pressure that following the example of colonial Britain, intensified stage by stage. The prisoners would have got used to the pressure even if it had been so intense. During the first days, they kept the prisoners locked up in their rooms. Then they deprived the prisoners from receiving food from their families. Later, they banned barbers from shaving or trimming their beards and heads. Finally, they banned reading books.

Ramadan came after winter. Our food was restricted to raw, gritty dried bread baked in the general Dehmazang prison. We had to eat it with water. Even salt and pepper was not allowed. After the assassination of Nadir Shah, each prisoner was allowed to receive five afghanis every week from his family to cook his own food in his room. They installed electric bulbs in the rooms, which did not go off until morning. Every two hours through the night, the guards would change, and the new guards had to wake up the prisoners to make sure they were inside; therefore, a peaceful sleep was not possible. Even in the severe cold weather, a prisoner did not have permission to put his brazier on the balcony to burn off the coal fire carbon; he had to do it inside his room. A prisoner was lucky to use the toilet more than twice in 24 hours. Those suffering from diarrhea and constipation had to relieve themselves inside their rooms. A prisoner who could get a chance to use the toilet had to sit under the shadow of a guard standing by the entrance.

There was no doctor or medicine for the sick. Sitting in the sun on the balcony even for a few minutes was not acceptable. Some prisoners, like M. Kabir Monshizadeh, a popular actor of Paghman Theater, and Mirza M. Yusof Haqiqi, a secretary of the Health Ministry, were exposed to extreme mental pressure. Mohammad Kabir's brother, Mohammad Karim Monshizadeh, asked for another room for his sick brother, but the guards did not have the power to grant him another room. He repeated his appeal to Torah Baz as he belligerently entered the prison. The commandant, with his club-holding soldiers, stood on the balcony and spoke these words in a loud voice: "The family that encroached on the British Embassy has to suffer this punishment! Do you not know that Afghanistan is like a sparrow and the British government like a falcon?" (M. Azim Monshizadeh, brother of M. Karim, had entered the British Embassy to assassinate the British ambassador. His brothers, M. Kabir, M. Karim, M. Bashir, M. Monir, with his cousin, Abdollah, and his brother-in-law, M. Hosayn were all detained for the same reason. Later, M. Karim, who was a graduate of Sweden in the field of telephone, died in the prison.)

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In uttering these words, Torah Baz gesticulated like Hashem Khan, the prime minister, by drooping one shoulder, chewing his words, and waving his arms.

At this moment, a prison official said, "Abdol Aziz Kandahari asks for another inmate as an aide because he is old and feeble."

Torah Baz inquired, "Which Abdol Aziz?" (There was another Abdol Aziz, a Kabuli merchant, in the prison.)

"Abdol Aziz, the information director of the Foreign Ministry," the official answered.

Torah Baz ordered the guards to drag him out of his cell. They held his hands and by the order of the commandant slapped him on the face so hard until it was completely swollen. "Damn your father, do you still ask for a servant?" Torah Baz shouted at him.

Who was Torah Baz? He started his job in the military intelligence of Amir Habibollah regime for a salary of 25 rupees a month. He reached the rank of major when working as a frontier officer during the reign of King Amanollah. At that time, he became familiar with British politics and British frontier officers. During the rebellion, he sided with Nadir Shah against King Amanollah. Now he was the security commander and an executioner of the youths. This ruthless and despicable man is still alive until the writing of this book and he is a millionaire in Kabul.

Once or twice a month, he inspected the prison in the evening. Before his arrival, the prison official, Nathar Ahmad, ordered the prisoners to clean the balcony in front of their rooms. Torah Baz always came escorted by a group of whip-holding policemen. Without saying a word, he strolled on the balcony and then returned. One day M. Yusof Haqiqi had closed his door from inside the room, refusing to eat and talk. In the evening, the commandant arrived and ordered the guards to break the door. When he was dragged out, he looked like a pre-historic man, with long disheveled hair on the head and face. The commandant, without asking him any question, ordered four guards to lift him off the ground and keep his body suspended in the air. Then he ordered two policemen to beat him hard. They kept beating him until they were tired. During all this time, Haqiqi did not say a word. When the beating ended, he screamed: "A government that has no sense of ruling should never rule." They tied his hands with a rope in his room.

The following day M. Ebrahim Qarizadeh, a 20-year-old student of Istaqlala School, was severely smacked. He was accused of having thrown rocks on the Baghlan-Mazar road to block it the day when Prime Minister Hashem Khan was returning from Maimana to Kabul.

## Dehmazang Prison

The government condemned Qarizadeh to run from Baghlan to Kabul before a riding soldier. In Saraye Muti, he suffered from "prison fever" and died in Dehmazang hospital. For two weeks, his mother and sister, hungry and thirsty, cried by his bed in the hospital from morning to evening. In the evenings during that time, the prison guards sent them to their home.

I also suffered from the same disease. They hospitalized me in the same room. Our treatment physician was an Indian – perhaps a pharmacist or veterinarian, not a doctor. My coma, which lasted 15 days, excused me from using his medicine. Luckily, I came out alive. The other sick prisoner in our room was Mohayedin Khan Anis, a famous writer in Kabul, who suffered from lung tuberculosis and was transferred to Dehmazang, where he also died in the prison.

Our hospital nurses were prisoners, with chains on their feet. They had never heard of the word nursing. One of them was Mulla Jura, who wished to tell me his stories whenever he had a chance. One day he pointed to a rounded two-floor house, with its balcony covered with a mat curtain. The house was located within the Dehmazang prison courtyard. He pointed that Abdol Hakim Rostaqi was out there. The balcony had a mat cover so that he could not see the outside world, he said. They were starving him to death by delaying his food ration. One night the commandant and the intelligence chief entered the house under the name of interrogation, he said. In the morning, they took out his body, which was hanging from a rope from the ceiling, and buried it in the prison cemetery, Mulla Jura told me.

When Mulla Jura was telling me this story, the sound of a prayer came from the neighboring room. Mulla Jura said the prayer came from a sick prisoner named Mulla Abdol Awal Qoraishi Rostaqi. He said they have also locked him in and delayed his ration. "I am afraid he will be starved to death, just like Abdol Hakim," he said. Unexpectedly, however, he did survive and left the prison several years later.

The prison director was Mr. Seyyid Kamal Baha, who had received his police training in London. Now more than a thousand prisoners were under his torture. His elder brother Sarfaraz Baha, the secretary of Amraddin Khan, the governor of Farah province, was involved in the Paktia rebellion against King Amanollah in 1924. His other brother, Mirza Seyyid Abbas Baha, a secretary of the Security Ministry, rendered many overt and covert services for the Nadir Shah regime, which appointed him governor of a province. Today some of its family members are among the rich and the nobility in the country.

A patient in the Dehmazang Hospital, who had a black beard, an attractive complexion, and bright eyes, was suffering from tuberculosis. He was a native of Kapisa. One day he was walking in the wooden hall of the hospital, constantly coughing and spitting out phlegm. He was suffering from lung tuberculosis. I told

him he was harming others by his carelessness. He said. "There is no spittoon in my room. Other patients are doing the same thing."

At this moment, another patient came, looking like a dried stick. His name was Melham, a native of Herat. He complained, "I am very sick and need a bed. Today they ordered me to leave my bed and return to the 50-man room in the General Prison. Tomorrow I will ask the director to let me stay in the hospital for a few more days. If he does not, I will accept my fate," he said.

I told him that life in this hospital might not be very different from the prison rooms. "Why do you insist on remaining here?" I said. He stared at me and said, "We are fifty persons in one room. At night, we throw ourselves in sacks to protect ourselves from lice, fleas, and other insects."

The next morning while sitting by the window, I saw Melham in his long hospital robe sitting on a cobbled step. After a while, the prison director appeared, walking in his military uniform ahead of several men. Suddenly Melham, with his trembling and frail body, threw himself before the director, crying in a painful voice, "For God's sake, don't expel me from the hospital!" The director kicked him hard and cursed his father. He kept kicking him even after the patient collapsed. The director went away and the guards pulled Melham inside the hospital.

The next morning, as I was looking down the window, I noticed a stretcher covered with a dirty cloth. At this time, Mulla Jura came in and said, "It is Melham's body on the stretcher. Last night he died in a state of coma. Now they are waiting for a mulla to come and say a funeral prayer for his burial."

The soldiers poured in, with clubs and whips, driving all of the prisoners, like a flock of animals, from the prison courtyard into their rooms and locked them in. I stood by the window one afternoon and saw the soldiers standing in a state of readiness. After a while, a large crowd of officials and officers emerged, walking behind the prime minister, who went around the prison. The prime minister wore a dark suit with a red necktie. As it was his habit, he was drooping his right shoulder. In the evening, the prison resumed its normal condition.

Mulla Jura came in, reporting another incident: "Today a strange thing happened. After all the prisoners were rounded up and driven into their rooms, the only persons remaining outside were an old man and his relative inmate standing by the prison stream. The old man was standing on his prayer rug, performing the afternoon prayer. His relative was waiting for the old man to finish his prayer to carry him on his back to his room, as he always did. The soldiers were rushing the old man to end his prayer. The moment his prayer ended and his relative was about to carry him on his back, the prime minister arrived. The old man cried, 'I am innocent and close to death. Have mercy on me!' The prime minister approached the old man, saying, '*Old father, I have not imprisoned you. God has imprisoned you. Instead of me, ask God to release you*' The old man remained silent. The fawning and wicked companions of the prime minister, such as the security commandant, the



intelligence chief, the governor of Kabul, the prison director, and others, shook their heads, confirming the words of their boss. Then they looked at one another to express their feelings about these 'words of wisdom and explicit revelations' by the prime minister-the words that had tied to the chains of delusions and superstitions the minds of millions of people in the country."

In **Saraye Muti Prison**, appearances of the prisoners changed very quickly because hair and nail clipping was banned in the prison. During the Ramadan Eid holiday, children of the prisoners were permitted to visit their fathers for an hour.

However, when the children saw the prisoners looking like wild animals with long hair, they could not identify their fathers and escaped from the prison screaming. Several days later, the prison official announced that anyone who wanted to have his nails cut, he could stick his hands out from the door hole and ask the guard to cut them with his knife. After this announcement, the official expected a prayer of gratitude from the prisoners to the government, but these prisoners, not yet corrupted by the direct influence of imperialism and its puppet regime, generally belonged to a free generation that existed before the new regime. It took the government several years to be able to corrupt a number of youths by means of indoctrination, coercion, and entrapment-a generation that did not know much about the past.

In the same prison, officer Habash Khan stood on the balcony and delivered a strong speech against despotism and brutality by the government. He demonstrated this by going on a hunger strike, as did hotel owner Gholam Mohammad. This forced the government to ask why. They said they would break the strike on the condition that their cases be investigated and decided on. The commandant apparently accepted the terms, and they broke their hunger strike, but the government did not fulfill its pledge.

Habash Khan, a military graduate of Turkey, had fought alongside Charkhi against Saqqao. The government expelled him from the army. After he opened a coffee house, with the partnership of M. Akbar Kateb, the government summoned him at Kabul Gendarmerie. After receiving 500 lashes, he went to prison and remained there for 13 years. However, his partner, M. Akbar Kateb was appointed director, president, and consul in British India, and finally emerged as a man of fame and wealth in Kabul.

Gholam Mohammad, a hotel owner, an honest Indian immigrant, who refused to spy for the British Embassy in Kabul, was imprisoned for 13 years. Meta Sing, another frontier Afghan and owner of Kabul Café, remained in prison for 13 years for the same reason. His wife, who was German, left Afghanistan. Qazi Mahmud Sanjari, another immigrant, was transferred from Seraye Muti to join his

brother, Hakim Aslam, in the Arg prison. He remained there for 13 years simply because they had refused to apologize to the British Embassy in Kabul.

In his prison cell, M. Omar the Tall, a graduate of Germany and expert in leather industry, told the commandant: "The government is putting pressure on the people and executing the educated youths. It does not hear and understand our words. We had to burst our words from the pistol into his ears"-a reference to the assassinations at the Afghan Embassy in Berlin and at British Embassy in Kabul. The government kept this free spirit in prison for 13 years. When he got out, he was a disabled man and died in misery. One day the warden insulted Mir Abdol Rashid Bigham on a trifle matter. Bigham, offended, struck him in the mouth. For this, he had to spend ten years in prison and banishment.

No prisoner knew his future destiny, and this was a psychological torture. He did not know whether he would be investigated, how long his prison term would be, how his family and relatives were being treated – and many other questions. Such uncertainty, even for a short period, can be more disturbing than a verdict of imprisonment for life, but the government kept a prisoner in the dark until execution or banishment. In this way, a prisoner pined away with lasting pain, fear, and anxiety, particularly when he was alone and banned from talking to anyone. The government, acting like a foreign enemy, also punished innocent children and families of the prisoners. For example, the government did not stop at putting in prison only the person of Abdol Ghafar (Kandak Mishr), a former director of planning in the Defense Ministry; it also brought to the prison his brother and nephews (Abdol Ghafur, Mohammad Ebrahim, and Abdollah). They were old men when they left the prison.

When I entered the Muti prison I also found next to me my two brothers, Mir Gholam Hamed Bahar, a military graduate of Moscow; Mir Abdol Rashid Begham, a graduate of Germany; and two of my cousins: Seyyid Akram, a former secretary of Afghan Embassy in London and Mirza Seyyid Daud. For ten years, they suffered the pain of imprisonment and banishment. Seyyid Daud lost his eyesight because the government refused medical treatment for the prisoners for several years. Outside the prison, the government had discharged my other cousin, Mir Mohammad Shah, chief of the staff of the Kabul army. He opened a china shop in order to feed his family. My other brother, Mir Abdol Alim, an army clerk, was also removed from his post. In order to feed his family, he made and sold kites in Kabul. My little child, Asad Hassan, a first grade student of Istaqlal School, with 12 of my cousins and nephews were expelled from schools. (Among them were Mir Ahmad Ali, Seyyid Ahmad, Seyyid Abdol Ahmad, Seyyid Sharif, Seyyid Mohammad, Seyyid Aziz, Seyyid Bashir, Seyyid Karim, Mir Gholam Ghous, Mohammad Hosayn, Mir Gol Khan, and several others.)

Of course, the effects of these punishments were obvious on the spirits of the youths in the country. This policy was applied to all political prisoners, including

the prisoners of the Muti Prison, among whom were: Serwer Juya, Akbar Faregh, Mohammad Naim, Mir Othman, Gholam Reza, Gholam Rasul (translator), Mohammad Ali, Abdol Fattah, Aref Khan (Telegrapher), Seyyid Zahuraddin (teacher), Mohammad Hashem, Abdol Ghafur, Abdol Rauf, Payendah Mohammad (last four former directors and head clerks of the Foreign Ministry), Gholam Mohammad, Mohammad Aziz, Mohammad Ishaq, Mohammad Zaman, Mahmud Khan (last five high school students), Seyyid Abubakr (zincographer), Mohammad Qassem (head clerk), Gholam Haider (teacher), Mohammad Yunes (engineering student), Qorban Ali (shoe-maker), Mirza Shir Mohammad (intelligence clerk), Gholam Destgir (clerk of the Royal Secretariat), and other prisoners.

The government had placed as prisoners three of its spies in the Muti prison. One of them was the aforementioned Mirza Niko, who, like other prisoners, had chains. At night, however, he would teach the prison warden how to treat other prisoners. Of course, he was released earlier than everybody else and became a member of the investigation board of the Muti Prison at Kabul security department. Obviously, the government and the imperialist intelligence had recruited more members from the youths of every class and used their services. The identity of such persons is hard to detail and explain with evidence.

The locked-in period lasted more than a year. During the period, when Nassar Ahmad Lugari was in charge of the prison, families of the prisoners faced threat and extortion. Even Nassar Ahmad, a forty-year-old man, through a conspiracy married a daughter of the prisoner Shir Mohammad and deceitfully collected the marriage dowry from some prisoners' houses. For example, in a message to Mohammad Naim, he demanded a rug, pretending that the prisoner's damp cell needed it. Naim's wife sent a rug to the prison, but it ended up in Nassar's house. In the same way, he collected his other house needs from the families that could not have direct contacts with the prisoners; therefore, they trusted the messages of the prison warden.

In return for his persecution of the prisoners, the government promoted Nassar Ahmad from a minor security officer to the rank of lieutenant general. This was the ruling family's old policy, which granted promotion to its officials in proportion to their abuse and persecution of the Afghan people. The government either demoted or discharged many governors and officials from government services because of their honesty and tolerant behavior with the public.

However, the young Shir Mohammad fell sick in his room under the burden of oppressive pressure, with no access to doctor, medicine, and sunlight. His room, located in the southern wing of the prison, was in the shade, whereas the toilet was located in the sunny northern wing of the prison. One day he coiled, like a snake, around the sunlit wooden post of the toilet outside his room. The guard, however, violently pushed him away from the post inside the toilet. This was his last feeling of the sun, for he died soon in his dark and cold prison cell.

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What would have been his thought during his moment of death in that terrifying room about himself, his wife, his children, and his occupied country? We do not know except that he closed his eyes alone while bats were flying over his head. Finally, death's deep sleep removed the heavy burden of life from his shoulder.

The next day, his body was laid on a wooden bed on the balcony, with his feet still in chains. Then an order from the government said that a doctor should examine the body to make sure the prisoner is not pretending death and then the chains should be broken and the body delivered to the family. His older brother, Mirza Nur Mohammad, a former head clerk, after serving his prison term, sat on the city sidewalks earning his living as a letter-writer. As his brother, he also died after a life of pain and suffering. The government committed these crimes to break the resisting spirit of the Afghan youths and confront their families with terror and misery. The government had created so much terror and embarked on such a menacing propaganda policy that the people offered pardon prayers to tomb of King Abdur Rahman.

### **Kutwali Prisons**

Nadir Shah was assassinated during our lockup period in Seraye Muti. A few months later, the yearlong interrogation of prisoners began in the Arg and Kabul Kutwali (security). What was the interrogation about and how it went? At night, a prisoner, blindfolded, would be taken to the security headquarters. Across from the commandant's office was an empty room, except for a table placed in the center, with two clay ewers under it. The prisoner had to sit and sleep on the naked table. He had to drink water from one ewer and urinate into the other. Only deep into the night, he, with a guard, could go to the open toilet, and that was once a night only. The room door, which was without any glass, was locked from outside. The ceiling had a crack to let the moonlight into the room. If his family was not aware, he had to stay hungry. He did not have a sleeping bed until the end of the interrogation either. The interrogation started at night. When crossing the small court to the interrogation room, the prisoner was blindfolded.

Unlike the small room, the interrogation room was well furnished. The prisoner sat in front of the interrogation body consisting of Mirza Niko, Mirza Khair Mohammad, and another unknown figure. The questions came from another room, and the answers went there too. These were the main questions: "Do you know Mohammad Azim? Did you have any contacts with him? Were you aware of his action at the British Embassy? Why did you have contacts with these persons? (He was shown a long list of names.) What was your purpose in seeing them?" If a prisoner refused to say that he had any contact with these people, another list would

be shown and the prisoner would be asked: "Mohammad Azim himself has given these names as his collaborators. Your name is included."

This writer went through these stages. The interrogators presented to me another list of names from the prisoners of Seraye Muti. These words in red appeared next to my name and those of a few other prisoners: "Should be taken to the Arg prison." I remained in this graveyard for about a week. At night, from behind the door I heard the guards talking mostly about the Kutwali detention cells and prisoners. I learned from their talks that the government was not feeding the political prisoners, including M. Aziz Ghorbandi (brother of Shoja Daula), Mohammad Amin (nephew of M. Wali Khan), Mohayedin Anis, and others, in the large detention center, while the poor prisoners were fed by their colleagues.

One of the prisoners named Mohammad Mirjan, a translator, had managed to smuggle out a letter and send it to Prime Minister Hashem Khan, whom the prisoner directly linked to these crimes and brutalities. He had also demanded an end to his gradual death. The prime minister returned the letter to the Kutwali commandant, who then warned that the detention officers in charge would be held responsible and chained in place of a prisoner who had established contact with the outside world.

I heard another guard telling how the commandant suspended Mir Aziz Khan and Mir Masjedi from their hair during the interrogation until they confessed to having published underground night letters. The government executed both of them.

Another soldier said, "Suspension is not so difficult. There was another political prisoner called Sarajoddin, who was accused of having written a lyric. He did not confess to having written a lyric even though he was severely beaten. He did not say a word. They took him to the commandant, who told him: "I will make you confess in this session." He called for officer Abdol, a man from Wazirabad. "Mr. Abdol, do you see this lad, who has committed a treason and yet does not confess? I want you make him confess." Officer Abdol stood by the prisoner, threatening him to do a disgraceful thing. Immediately the prisoner asked the commandant to give him a pen and paper, vowing to confess whatever he had done. The commandant, laughingly, obtained his confessions.

I also learned from these talks that in the small detention center and other centers, all of which were connected, hundreds of other prisoners had no meal to eat because their families lived far away in villages. Every noon and evening, they would gather on the yard, waiting to pick up what would come off the tablecloths of a few rather rich prisoners. As soon as leftover was dropped out, the hungry prisoners rushed like wild animals, scrounging on pieces of bones, crumbs, and other scraps, with some scuffling among the more hungry prisoners. This unfortunate group—who were called the "loyal servants of His Majesty" by the mercenary and new emerging

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Afghan writers-was a section of the brave Afghan people who were being treated with so much brutality.

Several years later, M. Masum al-Mojadaddi, who lived near the Kutwali detention center in Moradkhani, said, "One night the Kabul police chief, Mir Abdul Aziz, came to my house. He was in a depressing mood. (This person was a graduate of London, who became the Arg intelligence director, then president of Afghanistan's intelligence, and finally Kabul governor.) I asked him why he was so upset. He said, *"I just passed through the detention house and heard cracking sounds. I turned on my hand- light and saw in a dark corner a few prisoners breaking bones and chewing them. This scene changed my mood."* Mojadaddi told me: *"That night I could not eat. The next day I bought a skinny horse, slaughtered it, cooked a soup and, with 100 pieces of bread, with the guards' permission, took it to the detention house in the evening. Henceforth, I continued to send 50 pieces of bread with several bowls of soup to the prisoners every night. Almost after a week, Intelligence Chief Mirza Mohammad Shah came to my house, saying, "His Majesty Prime Minister Hashem Khan says he has heard that you send food to the Kutwali prisoners. You should not do this in the future because the government wants to punish them for correction."*

When I lived in banishment in Farah, I often noticed that poor prisoners were paraded in the bazaar from store to store to beg for food. He had to walk with an iron chain on his neck, one end of which a guard held. But in Kabul the royal family members, with their supporters, lived like British lords. A former commandant of Kutwali, Khaja M. Naim, later told me:

*"There were three groups of prisoners in Kabul prisons. While the first and the second groups consisted of criminal suspects and political prisoners, the third group consisted of prisoners who were neither criminal nor political, with no file in the government offices. They were imprisoned on charges of possessing a mind and a consciousness, whose files contained only one word (Okay), with the signature of the prime minister: Whenever the prime minister received a list of prisoners, he would write the same word next to each name. The word "okay" became so popular that whenever a prisoner was asked what type of prisoner he was, he would say he was an "okay" prisoner. There was no need to interrogate an okay prisoner. One of these prisoners was an old friend, Gholam Hazrat Charikari, who lived for many years in prison. One day before the approach of Eid holiday-when the king, as usual, pardoned a number of them – I prepared a list of them, who either had a short time to be released or had not been released at the end of their terms. I added to the list the name of Gholam Hazrat and submitted it to the prime minister. After reading it, he asked: "Which Gholam Hazrat is this?" I told him he was an old exhausted man from Shamali, without any dossier." He laughed and said, "Son, he is a very deep person; he must remain in prison."*

Khaja said he then learned that it was a government program to remove from society intellectuals and awakened individuals even if they were not guilty. Several

years later, Khaja, with Seyyid Ismail Balkhi and a few others, established a secret circle and decided to assassinate Prime Minister Shah Mahmud on New Year's Day, but the plot was discovered and they were all put in prison.

### **The Royal Arg Prison**

New dark cells, with stifling corridors, were built in the southern and eastern sections of the Arg, in addition to the old cells. Here were about 100 political prisoners divided into three groups: the upper class, the middle class, and lower class. The upper class prisoners ate rice and were not in chains. The middle class prisoners were in chains and their food was stew only. The prisoners from the lower class fed on dry bread provided by the government. Nevertheless, they were all locked up for six years. Later, however, they could stay in the sun outside their cells for an hour a day.

Cursing and beating the prisoners was a common practice. The environment was so offensive that Abdol Hadi Dawi did not want to step outside his room before checking out and making sure Sarajoddin Gardizi Charsi (Charsi means hashish smoker), a prison officer, was not around. Several times before, the officer had abused him in order to break him apart. During the interrogation, a number of the prisoners faced cursing, beating, hot kerosene on their skulls, and other types of torture. This was the kind of prison life they had in the Arg prison for a period of 13 to 17 years, except for those who died in captivity or were hanged.

Among the opposition members in Kabul, Nadir Shah and Hashem Khan won the nicknames: Nadir-e Qassab (Nadir the Butcher) and Jani-e Azam (the Grand Criminal).

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### **Consequences of the Campaign by the Intellectuals**

The opposition intellectuals, besides their active campaign, also waged a literary and publicity campaign, encouraging the opposition to establish a political party and to overthrow the Nadir Shah regime. The following is a revolutionary poem by an opposition figure:

Why are we still waiting?  
The oppression has brought to our lips  
The last gasp of life

Glow like a candle  
To the memory of those charred in fire  
Ride out to the battle  
Against gloom and repression  
Raise dust to the air  
In the war against regression

There has never been so vile a ruler  
To drag his country to a quagmire –  
Wreaking so much havoc on his people  
To serve the interests of his clan and courtiers

The crime these traitors commit against the nation  
Makes the Earth shiver as it carries that burden of deception  
The cruelty they inflict upon the younger generation  
Even the earth has hardly seen it happen  
What they call justice means losses to the poor  
And gains to the rich and the profiteers

We are not alone complaining about this monster  
Every family and group is in grief and despair  
Never think an end to these disasters  
Unless this shroud-snatcher gang is cornered

Sitting at ease, hoping for hope and peace,  
How can you let its power remain unbridled?  
The people's salvation depends on our struggle  
How should we be expecting help from others?

Stand on your feet and raise your fists.



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Inflict on this wicked ogre your hardest hits.  
Time of patience is gone; time of action has come.  
Put your words into action in the battlefield

Form your organization, oh, oppressed people!  
So that you may come out alive from this hellfire  
Nothing can appease the fury of the nation  
Other than vengeance by the flashing dagger  
Start a revolution to break this oppression  
To the hanging rope, drag these traitors

Ask me not about the cruelty of this wicked regime  
Of what came from the enemy "trinity" reign  
Of what these eyes saw and how this heart felt  
And how our heart wailed and patience did melt.

Cleanse this filth off the face of the homeland  
Take pride in what you can without a foreign hand

(In this poem the word "trinity" refers to Nadir Shah and his two brothers.)

Finally, the opposition intellectual and publicity campaigns ended in assassinations, the start of which was with Seyyid Kamal's direct and militant protest to the British government. At that time, the Afghan opposition intellectuals had realized that the main cause of Afghanistan's misfortunes was the British influence and interference in the country. Therefore, a youth from Kabul, inspired by Seyyid Kamal's motto-"Beat the horse to frighten its rider"-said: "Beat the rider to frighten the horse." This was the underlying reason for the incident that took place at the British Embassy in Afghanistan.

### **Assassination at British Embassy**

A middle-class family named Monshizadeh lived in Kabul since the time of King Abdur Rahman. The father was Monshi M. Nazir. He held a government post, with some knowledge of English. His sons were mostly educated. His son, M. Azim, after graduating from Habibia School, continued his education in Germany during King Amanollah's time. He returned to Kabul with his German wife, Rura, who later returned to Germany and wrote a book titled *Rura Azim*. Azim, a youth of fair complexion, was physically small, but he had a pleasant white complexion. He was a thoughtful and sensitive patriot. He was also a writer and a translator in English and

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German. He had a strong feeling about the country's domestic situation and its foreign policy. He attributed the causes of the country's tragic and terrible situation to the British hostile policy implemented by its proxy regime in the country. Therefore, he decided to assassinate the British ambassador to Kabul in order to demonstrate to the world that the Afghan people were well aware of the British secret policy and the nature of its puppet regime in Afghanistan.

On Thursday, September 6, 1933, he stood at the gate of the British Embassy in Kabul, holding a briefcase. The guard at the embassy gate did not let him enter the embassy compound. He told a British official that he had to talk with the ambassador on a very important and confidential subject. Returning from the ambassador, the British official, Mr. Stinger, told Azim he could tell him whatever he wished to tell the ambassador because the latter was busy. Knowing that he could not see the ambassador, Azim told Mr. Stinger: "Since the ambassador does not wish to see me, I will take you in his place." He opened his briefcase and held a pistol. When Mr. Stinger saw the pistol, he tried to run away. Azim pursued and shot him. He also killed two Indian and Afghan men, who were working as a clerk and a gardener at the embassy. Then he laid down the pistol and surrendered to the embassy guards.

At this time, the ambassador arrived. Examining the enemy, he said, "I accept that the bullets have hit my heart."

Azim responded: "This was for the Foreign Ministry in London to know that Afghans can recognize them in any guise they enter their country." After this brief exchange of words, the ambassador returned to his office. Azim was put in a special Kutwali prison cell.

The news spread quickly in Kabul, causing fear among the ruling circles. Later, Mirza M. Yusof, the Defense Ministry's special secretary, told me: "Shah Mahmud was busy playing tennis on his house lawn. The prime minister immediately entered the palace after we heard the siren of his car. 'Have you heard what they did again?' He told Shah Mahmud, with his face full of fury and anger. 'One man entered the British Embassy and killed three persons' he said. The defense minister, disturbed by the news, said, 'You should teach the people of Kabul an unforgettable lesson.' The prime minister returned quickly and the defense minister quit the game and dismissed us."

Within a week, the government completed its secret investigation of M. Azim. In the meantime, it obtained a ruling by a shariah court for his execution. Because of his public confession of calling the act his duty and pride, there was no need to force him to confess by torture. Obviously, the handling of the case involved the British consultation and role; therefore, the government lacked the same freedom of action that it had exercised in the case of other prisoners.

On September 13, 1933, Azim was taken to the Dehmazang Prison courtyard. While the British Embassy representative was sitting on a chair, Azim, wearing a silk

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turban, proudly passed by him and stood under the gallows with a great deal of courage and self-control. A few minutes later, he was no longer in this world. However, he has remained alive in the history of political campaign in Afghanistan.

One of the false witnesses against M. Azim was Mirza Niko, whose connection to the government and the British intelligence was obvious. His testimony against Azim was fabricated and treacherous to mislead the sitting judge.

After his execution, the *Islah* newspaper in the same month under the headline "Verdict for Execution of Mohammad Azim the Murderer" published a mixture of fallacy and truth (# 678). The only fact from all that the newspaper published about him was the verdict of the judge (Mulla Ahmad Ghaznawi): "Mohammad Azim admitted he killed three persons and said he wanted to create incitement, revolt, and freedom..."

On such events, the government was a follower of the conspiracy school, as it published in the same issue a fabricated confession, which was full of accusations, and claimed that it was in his handwriting, to disfigure his honor. Under the confession, bearing no date, three government officials-Mulla Ahmad Ghaznawi, Torah Baz (Kutwali commandant), and Mirza Mohammad Shah (intelligence chief)-wrote these words: "The aforesaid Mohammad Azim wrote this text with his pen at our presence."

The reason why the government referred this case-not other cases of political execution-to a shariah court was because of its fear of the public sentiment against the British. Therefore, the monarchy gave the case a shariah color in an attempt to satisfy the public feeling.

With this ignoble method, on the same day, the government hanged Khaja Hedayetollah, another political prisoner, thus adding more salt to the opposition wound. However, his case was not referred to a shariah court. The government also threw into the Seraye Muti Prison more than 32 new young political prisoners. Furthermore, two days later, it executed a number of famous political prisoners, such as M. Wali Khan, Gholam Jailani Khan, and others in order to win the complete satisfaction of the British Embassy. In Kabul, the military government intensified its reign of terror, staging all these bloody scenes before the watching eyes of the young opposition patriots.

"Now it is my turn to sever the head of the snake after Seyyid Kamal and Mohammad Azim cut off its tail," said another young patriot. Two months later, the opposition inflicted its heaviest blow on the monarchy, shaking from foundation the despotic establishment.

## **Assassination of Nadir Shah**

On November 8, 1933-sixty one days after the assassination at the British Embassy-an award-giving ceremony was held on the lawn of the Delgosha Palace-the same place where a year ago Gholam Nabi Khan Charkhi was savagely beaten to death with gun barrels. A large number of civil and military officials were attending the ceremony. They were waiting for Nadir Shah to arrive and give awards to school students gathered on the lawn. The king arrived at 3:00 PM. The participants rose to salute the king. As he walked before the first saluting row, from the second row a 17-year-old youth raised his pistol and put it on the shoulder of his friend Mahmud Khan. He fired three times, aiming Nadir Shah's chest and heart. The king fell down, closing his eyes forever of the monarchy he had worked for so hard.

The ceremony ended with panic and doom. The 19-year-old son of the king, Mohammad Zaher, sat mourning next to his father's body. The king's brother, Shah Mahmud, with haste was on the way toward the palace. The other brother, Prime Minister Hashem Khan, had left before for a tour of the northern provinces.

The young attacker Abdol Khaleq cast away his pistol after the king was dead. He stood watching, having accomplished his only goal. The guards came and arrested the attacker. They carried the dead body inside the palace. The attacker, a native of the Hazara region, belonged to a toiling family of a deprived class of society. Abdol Khaleq was a 17-year-old student of Nejat School. He had a 9-year-old sister named Hafiza. He was a man of medium height, with an athletic body and white complexion. He was courageous and hit his targets skillfully, having practiced a great deal of target shooting, with his friends, at the Estalef entertainment park.

The assassination of Nadir Shah deeply affected Afghanistan's future administration. Although the imperialist policy did not capitulate to such events, it was forced to change its tactics-a change felt in both the administrative field and in the approach toward the youths. After this, the ruling family exercised caution in carrying out summary executions, for it knew that it was not possible to eliminate the young generation, whereas the latter could by repeated assassinations wipe out the whole ruling family. In that case, what type of regime would have emerged in Afghanistan? Although this was unpredictable, a regime against imperialist wishes would have a greater chance of emergence. Nevertheless, the assassination impact was felt in a change in the policy tactic by the monarchy, not in the policy strategy, which remained unchanged.

The changes in the administration came slowly and gradually, for a despotic regime owes its perpetuation to escalation or, at least, preservation of tyranny-not to its eradication. Therefore, the monarchy adopted a gradual approach, yet keeping its old terrifying mask. Although the regime panicked and resorted to recruiting new supporters and collaborators, it used conspiracies to conceal its brutalities, such as

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executions. Of course, this approach by the regime was much more deadly in undermining the people's spirit than a man-to-man sword fight.

With all these actions and reactions, the monarchy once again showed its savage nature and laid the first corner stones of the new monarchy on the bloodstream of youths. The monarchy had changed to a revengeful red-eyed wolf, tearing apart every being on its path. Out of fear, however, it wagged its tail as a sign of compromise with its enemy, thus resorting to trickery and conspiracy.

## **Chapter III**

### **Absolutism and Tyranny Continue (Hashem Khan's Rule - Nov. 1933-May 1946)**

#### **1- From the Three-Brother Rule to the Two-Uncle Rule**

Nadir Shah's assassination took place unexpectedly. With its extensive surveillance network and other protective mechanisms-with its terror of summary executions, different types of torture, dreadful prisons, and collective revenge in return for individual guilt-the government did not expect from the opposition such a bold action. Neither did the fragmented opposition anticipated such an event. Based on a four-year experience, no opposition member was willing to discuss or disclose his plan for serious actions with his close friends. Therefore, the assassination of Nadir Shah was also a surprise to the opposition. The immediate shock that the monarchy experienced did not last more than three hours. The assassination took place at three o'clock in the afternoon, but the public in Kabul was not fully aware of the incident until six o'clock in the evening. During the first three hours, the powerful hands of the protectors of the regime performed incredible activities. The privileged army officers hurried to help the regime by making the Kabul army barracks pledge their allegiance to Zaher Shah and by proclaiming through the cannon sounds his coronation to the public in Kabul.

Although the heir to the throne was Nadir Shah's son, the real power of the monarchy remained in the hands of the two brothers: Hashem and Shah Mahmud. The two brothers ruled Afghanistan for 14 years until the end of World War II. During this period, Zaher Shah-like Shah Shoja-living like a prisoner within the Arg confinement, had no power and involvement in the country's affairs. The only difference between the two was that Shah Shoja was a captive of the British Macnaghten, while Zaher Shah was a prisoner of his two uncles. Furthermore, Hashem Khan pitted princes Daud and M. Naim against the young king.

This honorary confinement of the young king, with the threat posed against him by the two uncles and cousins for a period of 14 years, created in him many complexes, to which he showed reactions later. He lived under these conditions from the age of 19 to 33. The confinement pressure and the rule of the elders forced him to resort to deceit and conspiracy. Although his life of isolation, boredom, and idleness led him to indulgence, it provided an opportunity for him to read and study. Nevertheless, these factors later proved that the king had weakness in his will and his behavior was conspiratorial and deceitful when he took the reign of the country. Obviously, these qualities did not benefit him as king or the country. If

training has any great effect on man's nature and the molding of his personality, then Zaher's first compulsory teacher, his uncle Hashem, should be blamed mostly for these flaws in the person of the king.

In the same afternoon that Nadir Shah was assassinated, Zaher Shah was proclaimed king by the sounds of the military cannons (Nov. 8, 1901). At that time, Hashem was touring the northern provinces. He returned to Kabul and took charge of the country from Shah Mahmud after he became aware of the assassination and assured of stability in the reign of the new king.

Hashem Khan received a decree from the new king to form his new Cabinet on November 19. Two days later, he raised the monthly wages of the army soldiers and officers-2 afghanis to soldiers, 3 afghanis to lower officers, and 4 afghanis to higher ranks-in addition to giving medals to the army officers. Thus, he won the army support. The following day, he announced his Cabinet, comprising the following members: Shah Mahmud, defense minister; M. Gol Khan Mohmand, interior minister; Faiz M. Zakriya, minister of foreign affairs; Allah Nawaz, minister of public works; Sardar Ahmad Ali (royal family), minister of education; Fazl Ahmad Mojadaddi, minister of justice; Mirza M.Yeftali, minister of commerce; Sardar M. Akbar, independent president of health, Rahimollah Zargar, independent president of communications.

The *Islah* newspaper (# 95) published on November 25 the policy of the new monarchy, with the king's signature:

*"The policy of the new government is based on the decrees of the sacred shariah and the promotion of the explicit ordinances of the faith of Mohammad (Peace upon him), in accordance to the policy of His Majesty, my martyr father, which, with the help of God, will be enforced in our dear Islamic country. In the same way, the kingdom's foreign policy will continue in accordance to the treaties signed during the reign of the late Martyr king."*

There was no mention of the "Constitution" in the policy. With the announcement of the new policy, it appeared that the monarchy was rudely challenging the Afghan people and ignoring completely the campaigns of the Afghan patriots, who had offered many sacrifices. The policy followed the colonial British approach, which the British stubbornly pursued against the wishes of the Indian people struggling for independence. The only difference between the two methods was that the monarchy in Kabul was much more afraid of the people. Although the regime was pretending that its old tyrannical hostility had remained unchanged and unshaken, it had become morally frightened. Therefore, it was more and more clinging to the army and to a number of supportive landlords and clerics, with increasing reliance on imperialism. In the area of internal administration, it followed a policy of duplicity by undertaking small, phony, and slow reforms programs with, however, counteracting schemes. Before all this, once again it showed its bloody fist to the Afghan people, particularly to the opposition intellectuals.

## **2- Summary Executions**

With the army supporting the royal family, Zaher Shah became king after the assassination, but Shah Mahmud began to run the country until the arrival of Hashem Khan, the prime minister.

Shah Mahmud's advisory body comprised the Indian Allah Nawaz, Foreign Minister Faiz M. Zakriya, Intelligence Chief Mirza M. Shah, Arg Security Chief Abdol Ghani, and Kabul Security Chief Torah Baz-the last two were the group vanguards. Now the previous military government was changing into a martial and killing force, plunging the whole Kabul city into an abyss of threat and fear.

With the arrival of Hashem in Kabul, Shah Mahmud became much more engaged in military affairs, abandoning his other duties. Up to that time, however, he had thrown into prison dozens of opposition intellectuals, with some of them being detained in the higher building of the Arg eastern entrance. He had created a dreadful torture house, where every night youths in chains, like the heretics in Spain, were subjected to various types of torture.

The torture weapons were in the first room, which every prisoner had to go through before entering the second room. The torture weapons laid in the first room consisted of canes, nails and ropes, hammers, hot kerosene devices, iron balls with wood handles, braziers, and other types of torture devices. In this room, the torturers stood next to Abdol Ghani and Torah Baz, together with some armed soldiers. A big rectangular table, packed with different kinds of fruits, stood at the center of the second room opening through a big door into the first one.

Shah Mahmud in his martial uniform sat at the head of the table, while Allah Nawaz, Faiz M. Zakriya, Mirza M. Shah sat at the two other sides. When necessary, they also brought a judge or a witness to hear or read the forced confessions or testimony of phony witnesses. Fearing retaliation by the opposition, the government, with its false courts and councils acting as accomplices in the butchery, stood under the cover of shariah.

They starved the suspects before investigation. A suspect in chains first faced interrogation by Shah Mahmud. Then he was taken back to the torture room if he did not confess. During the torture, the door of the investigation room was kept closed, so that they would not see the torture scene and its weapons. Allah Nawaz silently watched the torture process without talking to anyone except Faiz M. Zakriya, who constantly talked and at times joked.

Application of torture differed from person to person. Some suspects were tortured with hot iron balls placed under their armpits. The torture continued until the smell of burning flesh exuded from under their armpits, while other suspects were tortured with their feet tied and their toes cracked with nails. Some of them were beaten on the back with a cane. Some others were tortured with hot oil poured on their naked thighs. Then the tortured suspects were carried on the backs of



soldiers or on boards to the prison, where Indian doctors kept them alive for more investigations or executions. Just as their wounds were beginning to heal, they were sent back to the investigation room. More torture followed if they did not answer Shah Mahmud's questions. This macabre show lasted about forty days in the royal amphitheater.

During that period, Abdol Khaleq underwent so much torture that his thighs disintegrated, and he could not move. In spite of that, he refused to disclose any of his friends, constantly saying he alone decided to kill Nadir Shah. His friends were also tortured, but they did not disclose any name either. A suspect by the name of M. Ishaq said, "I am aware of the whole plan. If you let me see Abdol Khaleq, I will explain it in detail."

Abdol Khaleq was brought on a stretcher before his wounded friend. Looking at Abdol Khaleq, much more wounded than he was, Ishaq excitedly cried, "My old friend, why didn't you trust me and your friends when you concealed your decision? If you had not done so, no one from this government would have been alive today. This is my last word to you. May God be with you!"

Abdol Khaleq answered, "You're right, my friend. My caution was not appropriate. I apologize."

The investigation team members turned pale at watching this courageous scene, for they viewed the people in the mirror of their own ignoble spirit. They had no sense of courage and manliness. Undoubtedly, if some of these savage tortures had been inflicted on Shah Mahmud and his colleagues, they would have confessed even the sins they had not committed.

"I have heard you call us names. Is it true?" Shah Mahmud asked a young suspect in an investigation session. The youth said, "Not only you, but also the king, the prime minister, and your whole clique. If you wish to know, I will mention them." Faiz M. Zakriya did not give him a chance to mention them.

"As deputy education minister, how could he be unaware of the thought and behavior of school students, one of whom killed the king?" They asked Mir Seyyid Qassem, deputy education minister.

"This monarchy is like a water-carrier, who inflates his water-skin with air, tightens its mouth, and sits on it pressing it until it erupts. This incident (the assassination) is a result of your own acts and behavior toward the Afghan people. If not Abdol Khaleq, somebody else would have done it, and so it will in the future," Mir Qassem answered.

From Seraye Muti Prison, in which this writer was imprisoned, several men were sent to the torture house. After a while, soldiers brought them back to the prison. A youth by the name of M. Ishaq came back with his feet completely disjointed. He remained in the prison for years until he lost all of his teeth and turned old. The second one was Sadaddin Beha, with his armpits scarred. The third youth was Abdol Fattah, who did not return to the prison. A rumor was spread that

he had died in another prison. Another youth, 17, who did not return was M. Zaman-a youth with no wrinkle on his face. He still had the same boyish cheerfulness and smiles in Seraye Muti Prison. They also took away this reckless youth, tortured him, and choked him like a sparrow.

Finally, one month after these events and tragedies, *Islah* wrote: "The police has completed its preliminary investigation of Abdol Khaleq and his friends and will submit it to a judicial court." (*Islah*, #104, Qaws) The same source added: "During the investigation of Abdol Khaleq, the police also discovered the sources of some publications against the government and arrested their agents. The publishers of these harmful publications had also confessed their guilt after much search and investigation." Subsequently, Borhan al-Din Koshkaki wrote this in *Islah* under the title "Conviction of the Mischief-Makers": Mir Aziz, Mir Masjedi, Mahmud, Mohammad Zaman, Amir Mohammad, and Mirza Mohammad have been sentenced to death by the court of the Ministry of Justice. The witness who proved their guilt was Brig.Gen. Abdol Ghani Khan, chief of the Arg security." (*Islah*, # 114, Qaws) In the same issue, under the title "Enforcement of Death Sentence," he wrote: "The verdict for the execution of the criminal Abdol Khaleq and other villains, issued by a lower court and two appeals courts and signed by the king, will be carried out today."

Before carrying out the verdict, the government raised the subject of the sentence before a large meeting of about 1000 persons on the courtyard of the Sadarat Uzama Palace (the Prime Ministry building). The gathering consisted of the Cabinet members, military officers up to the rank of major general, high-ranking officials, the Senate and the Shura members, the Jamiat ul-Ulama members, city elders, notables from Kabul and its suburbs and even retired officials. Presiding over the meeting were Prime Minister Hashem Khan and Defense Minister Shah Mahmud. Those testifying against the convicted were Army Chief Ahmad Ali Ludin, Justice Minister Fazl Ahmad Mojadaddi, Arg Security Chief Abdol Ghani, Nayeb Salar Sarbaland Jaji, Major Gen. Asil Khan, Major General Sarki Khan, Nayeb Salar M. Ghous, and Major Gen. Abdollah Tutakhil.

Foreign Minister Faiz M. Zakriya and Commerce Minister Mirza M. Yeftali pretended to be playing a mediating role. The prime minister was trying to assume a more impartial and compassionate posture than Shah Mahmud, and he was also trying to conceal this bloodshed by the government under the shield of the rulings of shariah courts and the judgment of this large gathering.

Members of the meeting were sitting in row after row, as in a theater, with the front rows restricted to courtiers, high-ranking military and civilian officials, and other henchmen of the monarchy. While the front rows were conducting all the talks and judgments, the middle and back rows, occupied by elders and city notables, could not see what was going on in the front, nor could they hear the

reading of the investigation reports and the talks of the main players. Therefore, most of them had sunk in long silence.

The prime minister, standing up, said, "Defense Minister Shah Mahmud Khan, who was head of the investigation of the killers of the martyr king, will present to you details of the issues and distinguish who deserves death or life, so that your votes may also become known."

Subsequently, Shah Mahmud stood up and said, "The shariah courts have tried and sentenced the killers of the martyr king. We present to you the details and seek your views."

Then Abdol Ahad Mahyar, president of the National Assembly, read the brief view of the investigation body, with the three-page court verdict. The reason they mixed the two reports was because the shariah court had condemned two persons to death and two others to life imprisonment, but the regime wanted to execute many people. Relying on Shah Mahmud's investigation papers and seeking the votes of its henchmen, the government wanted to kill the following persons:

Abdol Khaleq, an ethnic Hazara, the assassin of Nadir Shah; his assistant, Mahmud; M. Zaman Kabuli, Mahmud Kabuli, Mirza M. Kabuli, M. Ishaq Shirdel, M. Ishaq, Mauladad, Khodad, Qorban Ali (the last four were ethnic Hazaras), Mustafa Charkhi, Abdol Latif Charkhi, Rabbani Charkhi, LT. Ali Akbar, Aziz Tukhi, Abdollah Kabuli, M. Ayub (assistant dean of Nejat High School), M. Zaman Khan II, Azam Khaja (president of Electric Company), Mir Masjedi, Mir Aziz, Amir M., Mir Seyyid Qassem (deputy minister of education).

After the above list of names was read, a brave and pious judge by the name of Mulla Abdol Malek, a native of Nangarhar, stood and said, "According to the Islamic law, only the assassin and his assistant are condemned to death."

Abdollah Tutakhil stood up and opposed the judge: "When the Darikhil people revolted, their men and women were killed. Now, all of the above-mentioned persons, with the city elders, must be killed because they were aware of the plot but did not inform the government."

Shah Mahmud said, "With the help of two prisoners by the names of Mohammad Aziz Tukhi and Mohammad Ishaq Hazara, we have obtained information in our investigation that the Charkhi family and the Abdol Khaleq family had jointly carried out the action. Therefore, all of them must be killed. Only Aziz Tukhi and Ishaq Hazara should not be killed because they had taken an oath of the Quran with us." At this time, the government officials became engaged in an artificial row.

Hashem Khan said, "Your personal oath is not important. First of all, these two persons, who had collaborated with the conspirators and nodded to you, must be killed." The first row of the meeting, agreeing with the prime minister, said, "All of them must be killed."

Shah Mahmud, however, insisted on saving Aziz and Ishaq from execution. Finally, the prime minister said, "They must be imprisoned for life." The government's henchmen from the first row said loudly, "All of them must be killed." The back rows, however, expressed their revulsion.

At this time, Faiz M. Zakriya said, "We do not have any evidence against Mir Seyyid Qassem. The crime has nothing to do with Mir even if someone associated with education has committed it. For some time, I was also minister of education, but I was not responsible for an action by an individual associated with education."

"Even though we do not have a strong evidence against Mir, he must be killed because the court has decreed so." Shah Mahmud argued.

Army Chief Ahmad Ali, Justice Minister Fazl Ahmad Mojadaddi, Sarbaland Khan, Asil Khan, Gen. Sarki Khan, and Abdol Ghani Khan all stood up, calling for the execution of Mir Seyyid Qassem. Then Nayeb Salar M. Ghous and a mulla member of Jamiat ul-Ulama shouted: "Mir, who has not controlled the students, is the person to be killed. Not only Mir Qassem, but there are several others who must be killed too." Up to now, no one knew who the several others were.

Abdol Ahad Mahyar, Abdol Ghani, and M. Ghous walked along the rows, encouraging each person to vote for the executions of the four unnamed persons, while others were asking one another who these persons were. The meeting was in a state of tumult. At this time, Faiz M. Zakriya, standing on the second step of Sadarat building, said loudly, "Don't make a noise. I know one of the four persons and I know he cannot fool anyone by putting on modest clothes and going to the mosque. He could be involved in some conspiracies. (He meant Abdol Hadi Dawi.) However, we should not execute him because the case we are dealing with is the assassination of the king, in which he and others, like him, had no role. Amanollah made a mistake when he unfairly shed the blood of a Seyyid (He meant Alireza Khan), for which he made atonement. I do not want our young king at the onset of his reign shed the blood of an innocent person, particularly as one or two of these four persons are seyyids (related to the family of the Prophet)."

Responding to Major Gen. Fattah Mohammad, a member of the meeting, Abdol Ghani mentioned the names of the four persons: M. Anwar Besmel, Mir Gholam Mohammad Ghobar (this writer), and Serwer Juya. Besmel and Dawi were in the Arg Prison, while Juya and I were in Seraye Muti Prison.

"If they are not to be executed for the crime of murdering the king, then they must be killed for the crime of apostasy," answered Justice Minister Fazl Ahmad Mojadaddi.

"Hazrat Saheb, you have your own opinion, but what do the other people say?" The prime minister asked Mojadaddi.

"In my own ears, I have heard their atheistic belief and I have a witness," Mojadaddi answered.

"Nobody can judge the apostasy of Abdol Hadi Khan Dawi. Bring in your witness, if you have any?" Zakriya said.

Mojadaddi immediately summoned Maulawi Abdol Rab Taraki, president of the appeal court, and Maulawi Ebrahim Kamawi, member of Jamiat ul-Ulama and told them: "Now, you state what you have seen and heard about Mir Qassem's infidelity."

Mulla Abdol Rab said, "One day Maulawi Kamawi and I visited Mir. During our conversation, Mir said that the Quran is not the word of God; it's the word of Mohammad himself."

"Mir Qassem may have said this, but have you heard these words from others too?" Zakriya inquired. Both of them said no.

Mirza M. Yeftali said, "The issue of the assassination of the king must not be mixed with apostasy or conspiracy and propaganda against the government, so that we can vote properly."

Abdol Ghani, Ahmad Ali, and M. Ghous unanimously raised objections, saying: "Wazir Saheb, you're also one of them and must be executed with them."

"If we go by clues, all of us will be guilty, otherwise a few boys would not have succeeded. Now, let His Highness perform, as he has investigated. We are not interceding for Seyyid Qassem because he did not control his subordinates." Abdollah Tutakhil voiced his comment.

"If Mir Seyyid Qassem is to be executed for the guilt of his subordinates, then execute me too for the sins of a few of my subordinates in the Foreign Ministry. There is no God but Allah and Mohammad is his prophet!" Zakriya said persistently.

Ahmad Ali, M. Ghous, Abdol Ghani, and Sarbaland attacked Zakriya, while Ahmad Ali grabbed him by the collar and brought him down, shouting: "You're a traitor and deserve execution."

The prime minister approached Ahmad Ali and told him to exercise a degree of restraint, and then he shook off dust from Zakriya's clothes and said, "All this comes from noble sentiment, which has risen to a commotion. Never mind."

Of course, the government had made its own decision. The purpose of setting up this scenario was to frighten the people from the military. At the same time, it wanted to present a rather generous and forgiving image of the monarchy, in contrast to the army, the clergy, and high-ranking officials. During the debates, the government had already circulated a three-page resolution among the participants for endorsement. The resolution had three points:

First, it demanded the executions of the following 16 persons: Abdol Khaleq Hazara, assassin of Nadir Shah; his assistant, Mahmud; Khaleq's father, Khodadad; his uncle, Mauladad; his maternal uncle, Qorban Ali (Later, it was said that Khaleq's mother, his aunt, and his young sister were eliminated under the name of "medical treatment" in Seraye Badam Women Prison and their bodies were buried in an

unknown graveyard in Shohadai Salehin Cemetery in Kabul; thus, the light of the Khaleq household was extinguished forever.); Mahmud's uncle, Ali Akbar; Gholam Rabbani, Mustafa, and Abdol Latif, sons of the Charkhi family; M. Ayub, assistant dean of the school (Nejat School) Khaleq had attended; Mir Aziz, Mir Masjedi, Mahmud Khan II, M. Zaman, Mirza Mohammad, and Amir Mohammad, publishers of night-letters.

Second, the persons pardoned from execution but sentenced to life imprisonment were: M. Ishaq Sherdel, Abdollah, Azam Khaja, Mir Seyyid Qassem, Abdol Hadi Dawi, M. Anwar Besmil, Mir Gholam M. Ghobar, and Serwer Juya.

Two other prisoners, M. Ishaq Hazara and M. Aziz Tukhi, who had surrendered to the government, were also pardoned, but they remained in prison.

Third, the government also decided against executing political prisoners in the future; however, they had to remain in prison. Only the king has the power to pardon them.

This third decision was a direct outcome of the campaigns by the Afghan opposition intellectuals. In particular, Abdol Khaleq's sacrificial bullet saved hundreds of youths from pre-planned executions by the government, which feared that the continuation of terrorism would eliminate all members of the royal family.

The top officers, civil officials, members of the National Assembly, and pro-government mullas in the front rows were endorsing the three-page document, while those sitting in the back rows were watching the scenario with silence and resentment. At this time, it was announced that lunch was ready. At the end of the meeting, the low-ranking officials, the city notables, and elders, who had occupied the back rows, hastily left the scene to liberate themselves from the pain of their conscience and the gloom of this butcher-house.

The prime minister and Shah Mahmud, with the monarchy clique, headed toward the dining table, acting as if nothing important had happened. "The convicted men should be carried to Dehmazang for execution," Shah Mahmud ordered while walking toward the table. In the meantime, the government had made morbid preparation at the killing site. It had already ordered that the public should be gathered to view the bloody scene—a move aimed at suppressing the people in the capital and yet letting the news spread like a death toll ringing throughout the country.

Abdol Ghani escorted Shah Mahmud to the dinning room and came out immediately. He dialed a telephone and ordered the executions of prisoners. At this time, Faiz M. Zakriya, begged Shah Mahmud to pardon Seyyid Mir Qassem. He fell at his feet begging while the latter with a faked gesture turned down his request, saying: "I have no authority. The prime minister is also a brother of the martyr king." Then he fell on the feet of the prime minister, begging him to pardon Mir Qassem. "You should also kill me if you are going to kill Mir," he beseeched the prime minister. The prime minister looked at Shah Mahmud and said, "Let's accept

the appeal of the minister. In my view, smearing the monarchy with the blood of a seyyid is not suitable."

But the prime minister had already ordered the executions of two other seyyids: Mir Aziz and Mir Masjedi. In fact, the ruling family after the assassination of Nadir Shah had fear of revenge by the opposition; therefore, it could not afford to execute so easily a man of Mir Qassem caliber and some others who at that time enjoyed great popularity among the intellectual and academic circles.

At any rate, Shah Mahmud accepted the appeal and suspended the execution of Mir Qassem. At this time, Abdol Ghani disappeared for a while for carrying out Shah Mahmud's second order. It was now quite evident that only the two brothers, Hashem and Shah Mahmud, exercised the power to kill or pardon and that there was no king, no law or shariah in the country.

The lunch service at the Sadarat table lasted one hour. The talks at the lunch table were mundane, while the caravan of prisoners, flanked by walls of lances, walked in clanking chains, passing through the Arg and riverside streets toward the execution site. Of course, nobody, even members of their families, had permission to talk to them or at least hear their last words.

At the end of the caravan was Mir Seyyid Qassem, who was walking quietly. Although the government had pardoned him, it still wanted him to see the gallows and have a close taste of death. Years later, when this writer asked Mir Qassem about his feeling of those rare moments, he said, "When I left the Arg Prison and walked with the prisoners toward the slaughtering site in Dehmazang, my mind was preoccupied with death for the first half of the way and could not think about any other thing. Then, I began to experience a state of peace, and I saw innocent children watching our caravan while standing on the two opposite peaks of Asamaye and Shirderwazah mountains. At the hanging site, once again I became conscious and thought of saying farewell to life. At this time, the royal executioner put his hand on my shoulder and said, "You have been pardoned. Return to the Arg Prison."

In the afternoon of December 18, 1933, the mass killing was carried out in a horrifying way on the Dehmazang Square, opening a new chapter under the Nadir family monarchy. A large number of armed officers, soldiers, police had surrounded the area. Royal Court Minister Sardar Ahmad Shah, cousin of Nadir Shah; Deputy Court Minister, Sardar M. Haider Etamadi; Royal Military Advisor Seyyid Sharif; Haji Nawab Lugari, a companion of the king, with Kutwali Commandant Torah Baz, were present at the hanging site.

At first, Court Minister Sardar Ahmad Shah, his deputy, and Court Military Advisor Seyyid Sharif dragged at their feet the half-dying body of Abdol Khaleq.

"With which eye did you aim at the king's chest?" Then they plucked out his eyeball with a blade.

“With which finger did you trigger the pistol?’ Then they cut off one of his fingers.

In this manner, charlatans, pretending to be enforcing the Islamic law, ritualized killing by mutilation. Abdol Khaleq did not utter a word. By the order of these courtiers, armed soldiers went on thrusting their bayonets into his tortured body until it looked like a beehive. According to Prince Ahmad Ali Hindustani, who was an official observer of the scene, the dead body, smeared with blood and dirt, looked like a sack, which they rolled it from side to side. Then they hanged 15 other young persons.

Three days after the tragedy, *Islah* (#116, Qaws 29, 1312) published a forged document, full of false accusations, under the name of Abdol Khaleq’s confession. The publication of the fabricated confession represented the political character of the ruling family. How does human conscience and nobility allow man to express his hostility with such a false and ignoble weapon! The people in Kabul had an intimate knowledge of the Charkhi family. They knew that the Charkhi family had treated Abdol Khaleq and his family like its own children. Abdol Khaleq, who had spent his childhood in this family, was only 12 years old at the end of Amanollah’s reign. At the time of Charkhi’s death, Khalq was 16 years old. Since then, he had not seen any member of the Charkhi family because all of them, including women and children, were in Seraye Badam Prison after Charki was killed.

The government published the faked document after Khaleq’s death, as it did about M. Azim Monshizadeh. The people in Kabul were asking themselves: If we accept the government’s accusation that the love of a woman made Abdol Khaleq kill Nadir Shah, how about M. Azim? Was it also for the sake of a woman that he fired his gun at the British Embassy? How about Seyyid Kamal when he assassinated Nadir Shah’s brother in Berlin? Were all those night letters (the opposition spread) against the regime for the sake of women? What the regime did was not only against Azim, Khaleq, and the opposition, but also against the people and history of Afghanistan.

The government, as a student of imperialism, did not abide by any moral restraint in defending its own interests. Was it not the same government that in a book titled *The Afghan Nadir* misrepresented a proud and glorious event of the Afghan history-the declaration of independence and the Third Afghan - British War-in favor of a person thirsting for the monarchy? It was a literal interpretation of what the British writers had written. (See *The Afghan Nadir*, published in Kabul in 1310, pp. 97-98)

Abdol Khaleq, who killed the king in front of the guards and army officers and then surrendered himself, did not deny his act in the tormenting investigations or before the court judges. If he had said or written something else under intense and inhuman torture, it should have been in the context of the interrogation papers and the trial, not on a piece of paper without a title, and the interrogation of an



investigative body. Instead of issuing the investigation papers, the government tried to "authenticate" the forged paper with the endorsement of some hired mullas, who wrote only this in the margin: "One sheet of paper was signed and noted: Abdol Rab, M. Abdol Karim, Abdol Hay, Nasrollah." Of course, this signing or noting did not serve the purpose of the government because it did not verify Abdol Khaleq's writing or confession. Therefore, the government put more pressure on the mullas until two of them gave in and wrote these words beside the forged signature of Abdol Khaleq: "Written by Abdol Khaleq himself: Abdol Rab and M. Abdol Karim Kandahari."

Undoubtedly, if Seyyid Kamal had been executed by the regime, not by Germany-a legitimate government-his case would have not have been very different from that of M. Azim or Abdol Khaleq. After exposing him to brutal torture before killing him, the government would have published a long scroll of false accusations against him. The government, afraid of publishing the interrogation papers, which would have revealed its own deed, published only the shariah court verdict in the same issue of *Islah* (Qaws 29, 1312).

The following judicial officials signed and stamped the verdict: Mulla Ahmad Ghaznawi, preliminary court judge; Saleh Mohammad, the appeal court judge; Abdol Rab, the president of the court of cassation; Abdol Hay, the first member of court of cassation; Mohammad Ali, the first mufti of the preliminary court; Khairollah, the mufti of the preliminary court; Hazrat Nur, a mufti; Abdol Majid, the appeal court mufti; Nasrollah, the second member of the court of cassation, and M. Abdol Karim, a member of the court of cassation.

### **3- Another Face of the Ruling Family**

After the assassination, the government expanded its old plan of ruling the country by martial law and policing the people by provoking ethnic, religious, sectarian, linguistic, and provincial discriminations and by isolating the country, destroying its education and culture. In implementing this plan, it relied on reactionary aristocrats, major landowners, hired mullas, big merchants, collaborating Indian spies, and army officers. The government put in prison or banished Afghan opposition intellectuals. To destroy the ground for national campaign for the next 15 years, the government put under intense surveillance those who had escaped the sword in the capital and provinces. During this period, nobody could freely travel outside the country, nor could opposition intellectuals travel from one province to another without official permission. At post offices throughout the country, all correspondence from and to them was opened and read. Even a gathering or meeting of five intellectuals was not tolerated. Talking about the regime's domestic and foreign policies in parties, meetings, and public places became a taboo. One who talked about nationalism, patriotism, and progress was considered to be completely insane. Talking about freedom or equality or British imperialism was relegated to "national treason and a betrayal of the faith."

On the other hand, the government had trained a new group of individuals to serve the ruling family. Members of the newly born group were brought up to be so timid and ambitious that they did not refrain from resorting to any means in the race for getting a position or earning a living. Except for praising the various princes, uttering their names and titles, there was nothing else in meetings, newspapers, and later on radio (established in 1941). Nevertheless, the princes, out of fear, had also put themselves in their own cages. Hashem Khan abandoned horse riding and by his order the Arg walls were electrically wired. In addition to armed guards, cavalry units were guarding the two eastern and western gates of Sadarat. Nobody was allowed to stop at the gates or on the adjacent public street even though a cavalry unit always escorted Hashem Khan. He built a rampart around the new part of the building of the historical Shahrara Park when he possessed it.

Like his brother, Shah Mahmud also lived in fear and insecurity, protected by the bayonets of guards. Military guard units protected his house and houses of other princes, who were now prisoners of their own security measures and were issuing orders from behind the royal curtain. Local rulers were given a free hand to put pressure on the people, to arrest them and torture them. The policing networks had put the citizens under permanent threat. Even the Cabinet members were afraid of the intelligence chief. The youth could not find a secure refuge except under the protection of a member of the ruling family or Shahji or Allah Nawaz, otherwise they had to live, like a criminal, in constant fear.

## **AFGHANISTAN IN THE COURSE OF HISTORY**

Afghanistan was turned into a private house of the ruling family, in which the Afghan people were seen as the slaves and the absolute property of the ruling family. The state treasury key was in the hand of the monarchy, which also kept secret the country's budgets, revenues, and expenditure. All of the expenses of the royal family—such as clothes, food, and travel expenses—were paid from the state treasury. Three hundred members of the ruling family lived a regal life from the money that belonged to the toiling Afghan people. Twenty million afghanis from the national budget was allocated to the prime minister's personal use without obligating him to any accountability, excluding his other expenses. The entire military budget was in the hand of Shah Mahmud. He was not accountable to any other authority. The new National Assembly had the right to hear only about the balance of the annual state income and its annual expenditure and endorse it.

Despite all this, the ruling family's excessive greed—which had become part of its character—was unmatched in history. Since this family arrived in Afghanistan, nobody had been treated in its guesthouse with a cup of tea or a plate of food. Inside their harem, they cooked their own particular food on a brassier. The servants had never tasted their masters' food. The greed and stinginess of the family had become proverbial in Kabul. They had grown with these habits since childhood in India, where the British ration had accustomed the family to hardship and miserliness.

When they seized the monarchy, they went mad by thinking that the entire country and its treasure were in their possession. Like a hungry monster, they began devouring and devouring from everything until they puffed up. Wherever they found an orchard or land, they liked to possess it by different means: threat, extortion, gift, or confiscation. They gained shares in all banks and companies. They became engaged in private trade, in selling second-hand clothes, in lending and usury, in selling chicken and dairy store. They exported gold and precious stones, valuable manuscripts, rugs and leather. From their official salaries, food allowances, the money spent on official parties, the money and gifts received from merchants, the products of national and private factories, foreign currencies and from customs—from the Ministry of Finance, the government's budgets, and from every other resource in the country—they received their cash shares. They deposited hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign banks. They openly colluded with smugglers, merchants, companies, border officials, and others in plundering the country.

Prime Minister Hashem Khan had a turkey business, while the king had a dairy store. Ahmad Shah Khan, the court minister and the king's father-in-law, received his grain share from the Arg kitchen and sold it in the public market. When Hashem Khan died, auction buyers in Kabul were shocked by seeing his private warehouse, with piles of worker uniforms, helmets, building, sewing, cooking, medical, and hundreds of other new and old paraphernalia. Selling them took several years.

The family members have their savings deposited in the United States, London, Paris, Switzerland, and other countries. As for their savings in local currency, only from the savings of Hashem Khan, 25 million afghanis were given to his nephews: Mohammad Daud and Mohammad Naim.

Despite all these enormous wealth and savings, their miserliness has remained unchanged. In Lugal, Bagrami, Jalalabad, and elsewhere, Hashem Khan, by force and coercion, possessed any excellent piece of land he liked. He grabbed the jewelry of the wives of the political prisoners, such as Mirzaman Konari, Hassan Mohmand, and others. After he resigned from his post, he took home the furniture of the Sadarat building. To the day he died, he did not extend a penny to a destitute. With the government money, he built a state guesthouse on the northwestern corner of the Arg. With the king's permission, he possessed the building and then sold it to the government. The king did the same thing with the Paghman Garden and the building on Pagham Hill. He received the same value for the public properties from the state treasury. Shah Mahmud was also stingy; he never helped the poor. He often begged cigars from his guests at the billiard table. He borrowed money from his driver for his ticket to go to Kabul Cinema and never paid him back. He chastised and expelled the driver if he ever asked for his money. During the fall, he did not permit his gardener's sheep to feed even on the fallen leaves in his Rishkhor garden. Instead, he had them collected and sold to the poor gardeners.

Worst of all, both Shah Mahmud and Hashem Khan, who were ruling the country, did not enjoy the benefit of the knowledge of old or modern sciences, lacking education or study in any field. Therefore, they shunned meeting scholars and learned figures. They had surrounded themselves by persons who were either mentally inferior to them or could introduce themselves to be intellectually lower. Furthermore, Hashem Khan was defectively born and impotent; his changing voice indicated this defectiveness. This inferiority complex made him show more brutality. This person would have killed thousands of other people if the opposition had not fired those bullets.

#### **4- The Government Behavior**

In order to protect the monarchy for his family, Hashem Khan embarked on a policy of "purge" and "annihilation" against all the national liberationist forces. On the other hand, he attracted and strengthened regressive and manipulative elements to act as friends and partners with the monarchy. With his blind military force, he put a number of pro-monarchy clerics, major landowners, old aristocrats, big merchants, and the intelligence service in the frontline against the people. Supported by a foreign imperialist policy, the government enforced its own policy with increasing pressure-a policy based on political, economic, and administrative schemes, with religion used as a mask.

#### **Foreign Policy**

In his own foreign policy, Hashem Khan resorted to a unilateral policy of friendship with the British, following its advises and instructions. For this reason, he avoided improving relations with the Soviet Union. In the treaty between Iran and Afghanistan over the Hermand River water in 1938, he compromised the right of Afghanistan so that it might not become involved in outside conflicts, which would not allow the government to strengthen its position inside the country. In 1934, Afghanistan was accepted as a League of Nations member. In 1935, the government employed 150 Germans experts in textile, electricity and other industries. In 1936, Afghanistan extended its neutrality treaty with the Soviet Union. In the same year, it signed in Kabul a treaty of friendship with the U.S. charge de affairs to Iran. According to the treaty terms, the government granted the right for extraction of oil in Afghanistan to an American company for 75 years; however, after some preliminary operation, the company abandoned its right in 1939 because of the outbreak of World War II. In 1937, the Hashem government signed in Iran a non-aggression treaty with Turkey and Iran. The purpose of the treaty was to fortify the Islamic countries' belt along the southern Soviet borders. The government also signed friendship treaties with Brazil in 1933, with Hungary in 1934, with Czechoslovakia in 1937, and Holland in 1939.

Having embellished the foreign policy appearance, Hashem Khan, with a complete free hand, turned to further suppressing the Afghan society. However, his government was practically dependent on the British government, thus the closed-door policy and the political isolation of the country were continuing, as in the past.

## **Domestic Policy**

In domestic policy, Hashem Khan continued the suppressive policy, intending to take Afghanistan back to Abdur Rahman's reign in the 19th century. He expanded prisons and even planned to build a fortress-like prison covering tens of acres of land near Polcharkhi east of Kabul city to confine thousands of prisoners. Because of the approach of World War II, he did not have the opportunity to implement his plan. To further frighten the Afghan people, he banished political prisoners to remote parts of the country, where the public can directly witness the plight of those condemned by the government. The following is an account of what I witnessed in a remote part of Afghanistan:

### **Political Exile in Remote Rural Areas**

In early fall of 1935, an officer, holding a paper, opened the gate of Seraye Muti prison. The prisoners came out of their cells, standing on the balcony. The prisoners, he said loudly, whose names I will mention soon must come out with their beds on their backs. He read the names of 22 persons.

They divided us into two groups, each group unaware of the destination of the other. Soldiers threw the prisoners into the waiting coaches and drove away. This writer, with four members of his family, was with the first group. First, they took us to Kabul Kutwali prison and then inside the Kutwali corridor. At the entrance of the corridor, Intelligence Chief Mirza M. Shah and Kutwali Commandant Torah Baz were standing.

"His Majesty the King has ordered your release. However, you will remain here for a few days until the prime minister has time to give you his instructions. Then you can return to your homes," said the intelligence chief. The prisoners remained silent.

Of course, the release promise was false. On the contrary, the government had decided to intensify its punishment in every stage to undermine the resistance. For one week, the government publicized the release issue. Then one night Torah Baz called for us and read this decree from the prime minister: You will be banished to Kandahar and Khanabad provided that each one of you have someone who can guarantee that you will not escape or oppose the government.

"You have claimed that you want to serve the people. Now for a while, the government also wishes that you be in close contact with the people," Torah Baz added his own words to the decree.

Contrary to what he said, the prisoners were banished separately in remote villages in Farah, Uruzgan, Kandahar, and Paktia. Then the government branded them as traitors to the faith and the state among the local people. We had to report to the local governor every day; therefore, we could not move away from our designated places.

At any rate, 13 days later, along with our families, we mounted two caravans of freight trucks. One moved toward the north and the other toward the south. The caravan bound for the north included Seyyid Akram and Seyyid Daud (my cousins), Mirza Rahmatollah, Qassem, a clerk, M. Hosayn assistant dean of Istaqlal School; Abdol Ghafor, director of cryptogram; Abdol Raof, cryptogram clerk; Hafiz M. Akbar Faregh, a poet; and M. Naim, English translator. The south-bound caravan included this writer and his brothers, Mir Gholam Hamed Bahar, Mir Abdol Rashid Begham; Mirza Payendah Mohammad, a foreign ministry clerk; Gholam Mohammad, a medical student; Gholam Rasul, a French translator; Mirza Gholam Haider Modares, head clerk of the *Islah* newspaper. Gholam Reza, an English translator for the Foreign Ministry-who refused to go to India where he was

condemned to banishment-had to spend 10 more years in prison in Kabul. Only two prisoners did not face banishment: Mabud Khan, a German-educated prisoner, who committed suicide later, and Shir Ahmad, an intelligence clerk, who became a director in Sadarat.

On the truck that carried my family was an officer, who was sitting next to the driver, and two armed soldiers. When we arrived in Ghazni, the guards stopped the truck, bought lunch and began eating, but they did not allow us to get off and buy something to eat. The guards circled the trucks to prevent anyone from getting close to the prisoners. In the meantime, the truck commanding officer was trying to present to the public a mysterious and dangerous image of the prisoners.

We arrived in Moqor, where each family spent the night in a mud store backroom. Here we managed to buy some food through the soldiers. The caravan left Moqor at dawn, without giving us a chance to have breakfast. Nor did they give us a chance to eat in Qalat. At sunset, the caravan stopped at a corner of Maidan-e Arg in Kandahar city. The guards kept us there for two hours, while the local people passed by and looked at us from a distance. The guard officer disappeared for a while. He looked very tired when he returned. He said, "Since a state guest is supposed to enter the city tomorrow, Sardar Mohammad Daud, the governor and commander of Kandahar and Farah (cousin of the king), has ordered that you should be carried out of the city. After the Iranian guest leaves, we will come back." This was another lie, but the officer could not understand the government's secretive mentality.

Anyhow, we spent the night on the trucks without food by the Arghandab River Bridge. Another officer brought new instructions from Mohammad Daud, whose order this time was that the caravan should head toward Hirmand. We arrived on November 4 in Garishk, which, they told us, was our last exile station. The local governor was Dost M. Khan, a landlord from the province of Nangarhar. He ordered us to report to the local security office every morning and evening. He gave each family a shelter and one afghani per person for food every day.

The governor did not tell us the truth. After eight days, an officer and soldiers stopped a truck in front of each shelter and moved each family to a different place. I had to depart from my brothers.

One of them, Mir Abdol Rashid, remained in Garishk. The other brother, Mir Gholam Hamed, with his family, went to Garmsir in Rigestan. Other prisoners were scattered in Zamindawar and Chakhansur.

An officer and two soldiers guarded our truck. In the evening, we passed Delaram and arrived in Farah the following day. They took us to a caravansary in a village in Farah and told us that this was our final destination. As usual, this was not true. For two days later, the city Kutwali chief, Sardar Gholam Haidar Mohammadzai, with a long thick mustache, sent us away under the supervision of an officer and two soldiers. He had received the order from Governor Sardar Abdol



Razaq Mohammadzai. In the afternoon, we reached a dead-end. They brought a couple of donkeys from the nearby village. They put our sacks on the backs of the donkeys, and we walked behind them until we reached a mosque, in which we slept that night. The following day, after a short distance, we reached the area center, which was a scattered village on the left side of the Farahrud River. There were two dome-shaped adobes in an isolated spot. This was our permanent dwelling, they told us. I picked up a shovel to clean up the place. Just as I started shoveling, I saw two armed soldiers approaching me. "Sardar Saheb wants to see you at the court," they told me. I knew that the local chief must be another Mohammadzai.

The court that the soldier had mentioned was nothing more than an adobe, which had a few rooms, with a yard. Sardar Saheb was sitting on a mattress throne, with a clerk and a few local chiefs sitting around him. He was a thin, dark-skinned youth by the name of Abdol Raof Khan from Nangarhar province. He was the son-in-law of the governor of Farah. He appeared to be suffering from a bleary eye, on which he had put an amulet covered with a yellow fabric.

He turned to me and said, "According to an order from the capital, you and your family must live in Balabluk. Since you do not have a land to farm, the government will give each member of your family one rupee per day on a monthly basis. You must report to the office every morning and afternoon. You cannot go anywhere else, not even to Balabluk villages. "

Later I learned that he had put me under the surveillance of the chief of the village where I had to live. I left the court of Sardar Saheb. My children, the oldest of whom was eight years old, were hungry and asked me to buy bread. Here there was no bakery or bazaar. Every family baked its own bread, and they considered it a disgrace to sell bread. Therefore, for the time being I had to accept the free bread they offered.

### **A Picture of a Remote Village**

Balabluk-an area of scattered small villages-was located in the northeastern part of Farah on the edge of the Farahrud River. The people were farmers, with some herdsmen. There was no cottage industry, school, bazaar, and even a shop in the entire place. Even simple musical instruments, such as the drum, the tambourine, and the pipe, were not available.

They acquired most of their needs by using an exchange system. For instance, they traded hay for fire wood, wheat for grape, and so on. There was very little currency in use except in special cases. One chicken cost one rupee; one sir of wheat cost two and half rupees; one sir of oil cost 12 rupees; 50 eggs cost one rupee; and a sheep cost 10 rupees. Rice, vegetables, tea, sugar cubes, and other types of food

material were not available. Barley and wheat bread, yogurt, milk, and dried buttermilk were their basic food items.

Only the rich people could afford to eat lamb. There was no meat for sale, for there was no butcher shop. Not every family was able to slaughter a sheep except on special occasions: weddings, funeral gatherings, or for drying and preserving the meat for the winter. The breakfast of farmers and workers was qoruti (dried buttermilk soup) and their dinner was bread with yogurt. The landowners could afford to eat chicken soup and egg. Landless farmers and workers saved for selling the butter they gathered from the milk of their cows or ewes, if they had enough, and fed on barley bread and buttermilk. A loss of a cow meant a disaster for a family even though a cow did not cost more than 200 rupees.

Agha Shir lived near the house of Abdol Hamid. He was a tall and bony man of about 80 years old. Only once a month, he shaved his beard and mustache. He was not able to do hard work. He often told me stories about the time of King Shir Ali Khan, in whose army he had served as a soldier. Agha Shir had a wife and two sons. The older son toiled and hunted, while the younger one grazed the family cow. His wife baked bread for the Abdol Hamid family and other neighbors.

The tragedy started with the sudden death of the older son, who died of diarrhea. Now the family's life depended on the cow. The cow fed on dry hay, which was what the wife could get in return for her work for the Abdol Hamid family. Unfortunately, one day the cow died after its belly distended when it was grazing.

I saw how the younger son, afflicted with much pain, stopped playing with the village boys. His mother was painfully shedding tears. Agha Shir sat by the village stream, brooding for hours. Not having a piece of land, the family's whole life ended with the death of its cow. After that, they could not afford to eat more than two pieces of barley bread a day. The old man spent days along the Farahrud River, looking for a fish. Their only joy was when he returned from the river with one or two fish.

Marriage was very expensive here. The female population was less than that of the male, and wedding required heavy expenses. Some of them married from Baluch families in Chakhansur, who were poorer. They bought from Farah city their agricultural tools, clothes, cottons, thread and needles, and other needs.

Their houses had no carpets, not even mats. There was only a wooden bed in one corner of the house. The house appliances consisted of a water skin, a copper cup, a pottery bowl, and a copper ewer. Men and women wore long shirts, baggy trousers, scarves, and chadors. Jewelry was rare. Men and women walked bare-footed in the village. Nevertheless, they tried to be clean and kept their houses clean. In their social manners, they were serious, dignified, and polite. They did not use curse words and behaved properly.

There was a great deal of arable land on the riversides. However, because of lack of irrigation, a small portion of the land was cultivated. A prosperous farmer did not have more than 10 acres of land, except, of course, the big landowners. The richest landowner in Balabluk was Sultan M.Nurzai, a native of Dehzak. The government had given his father, Abdol Rahim Khan, the rank of honorary general. He had a great deal of land in the Nasrollah plain, which produced about 300 kherwar (dry measure roughly equal to 180,000 kilograms). Other khans, like Abdollah Khan and Mir Ahmad Khan, were not so rich. Altogether, they were somewhat literate and acted as liaisons between the local people and the government on official matters. Each one had a sort of small establishment of his own in his locale. The farm workers, who did farm and other types of seasonal jobs, were able to earn some wheat and buy clothing with great difficulty.

In general, the people of this area were strong, handsome, and hard working. Despite their poverty, they were proud and content. The women worked with their men without wearing a veil. To these free and proud women, living in purity was part of their nature, and they were free of immorality. What a terrible waste of such talents! Except for the seasonal workdays, here the human forces were wasting behind the sunny walls of mud houses, like lions in captivity. There was no industry, construction, or other type of employment that could utilize these strong arms of Asia for their own interests and those of their country.

These people lacked sufficient experience in growing beans, cucumbers, eggplants, melons and watermelons, and vegetables because they did not have a market for them. The irrigation tool was primitive. Except for a handful of mullas and khans, there was no literate person in the entire place. However, these people paid taxes and tolerated pressure by tax collectors. They paid additional taxes on uncounted livestock. The local office did not send to the central government all the tax money collected from the local people. They called the government tax "gham" or pain.

Except for the two religious Eid holidays, they did not celebrate seasonal festivals. There was no circumcision celebration here either. There was no music in weddings. Instead, they fired a few gunshots. On weddings, they served food to their guests. They escorted a bride on horseback to a bridegroom's house. Funeral was simple, without any ceremony. They accompanied the body to a graveyard. After the burial, a mulla read a prayer, and the bereaved received a few words of consolation. The bereaved never cried even if it was the death of his young son, for here crying was a shame. Not even mourning women wailed; they shed tears silently.

Intestinal diseases and pneumonia often caused death during the cold weather. Even during the winter wind chill, called "Siyabad" or the Black wind, the villagers came out of their furnace-heated domed houses at dawn and washed themselves in the icy river. Sometimes the common cold, without doctor and medicine, would end in fatal pneumonia. Some of them suffering from pneumonia or diarrhea came

to me and asked for some tea, which was medicinal to them. One day Sultan M. Khan, the biggest local khan, sent a horse for me to visit his village. He asked me to treat his brother, Abdol Raof Khan, who was suffering from pneumonia. I told them I was not a doctor. A few days later, I heard he had died.

During the Eid holidays, the village men and women gathered on the nearby field, playing games and breaking eggs. The women gathered separately near the male gathering. It was on a similar occasion that an official decree from the government banned the female gathering. The decree said, "Since the Islamic state of His Majesty the King is abiding by the Islamic shariah, henceforth the women are not allowed to come out for picnic on free grounds during the Eid holidays. For any woman coming out of her house, her man will be punished." Thus during the next Eid holiday, no woman was found on the plain.

The summer in Balabluk, as in Farah city, was hot, sometimes reaching 40 centigrade. The winter was mild and pleasant except for the black wind. Scarcity of forests and trees made the local people use desert bushes for firewood. Now and then, nomads brought wood from remote areas and exchanged it for hay to feed their animals. Not having a land and hay, I myself had to depend on desert bushes. I also carried home drinking water from the nearby river—a job restricted to women.

Soon I became familiar with the habits of this strong, intelligent, and pristine race and experienced their sincere goodwill. We, the newly arrivals, the "condemned," as we were called, were not only received well by the toiling people, but also the local khans treated us with nobility. When I needed flour, they sent me a donkey to carry my wheat to the local mill and the mill man always put me ahead of others. I had made friends with some who enjoyed talking with me for days and taking part in the common stone-throwing game, and whose wives, like close relatives, regularly came to my house.

In this desolate land, for hours I occupied myself with watching the vast horizon and the colorful but barren mountains of Balabluk. Being off the trade routes, these silent and vast deserts never rang with the sound of a passing caravan. No traveler would cross this valley of silence, with no courier bringing a letter. Generation after generation was born, grew, and died here, without seeing a city or hearing something new.

Anyhow, a few days after my arrival in the village, the government sent my brother, Mir Abdol Rashid Bigham, from Garishk to Balabluk, fearing that he, being unmarried, might run away. After a short while, the Farah governor, Sardar Abdol Razaq, came to the village. The local khans welcomed him and prepared an evening meal for him. That night he also called for me to see me physically. The party room, lighted by a weak hurricane, was half dark. A sturdy man, wearing dark glasses, was sitting at the head of the guests. He was making a speech before the local khans. His subject was etymology, explaining the roots of certain words in the Farah Pashtu dialect while drawing their attention to his Nangarhari Pashtu dialect. First

addressing the khans of Nurzai, Alizai, and Barakzai tribes, he said, *"You know very well that the lord and the crown of all Afghan tribes is the noble tribe of Mohammadzai, of which I am a member. Is it not true?"* The local khans, looking at one another meaningfully, preferred to remain silent. The Sardar was half-literate, but pretentious, with his eyes suffering from light phobia. However, he was a harmless person. Two days later, he returned to Farah city, and Balabluk sank back into its deep sleep until a new incident jolted it—an incident that exemplified the cruelty of the chiefs and khans to the common people.

### **The Story of Bakhtu**

One of my neighbors was a well-off farmer, owning a big house, an orchard, and several acres of land. This rather reticent brawny forty-year-old man had lost his young hunter son in pneumonia. He lived alone and in grief, with two childless wives and the young widow of his dead son. Abdol Hamid had the respect of his neighbors, for he did not bow to the local khans and had nothing to do with the government. He considered his close neighbor Aka Ebrahim an enemy. Ebrahim had young sons and a farmland. He had accused Hamid of having secretly killed his cousin and possessed his land.

One day Hamid took up his gun and entered Ebrahim's orchard. Ebrahim escaped into his house and closed the gate. Hamid told him that he would not kill him but punish him for the accusation he had leveled against him. He aimed at Ebrahim's cows and oxen, killing several of them. Then he went back to his house.

Ebrahim remained silent for some time until he caught Hamid by surprise. One summer night (in the summer, the people slept on their flat rooftops), Ebrahim, with his sons, approached Hamid's house. One of them stood by the house wall, hiding and appearing several times until Hamid's white powerful dog jumped down from the roof (the houses in Balabluk have low roofs) and chased the intruder out into the farmlands. At this time, another man appeared, threw before the dog a sheep's poisoned liver, and ran away. The dog ate the liver and died right away.

Then Ebrahim climbed up the low orchard wall onto the rooftop. He saw Hamid sleeping between his two wives, with his gun beside him. He aimed at his chest. The wives started screaming and the village people gathered. I was among the people on the scene. Hamid was dead and the killer had escaped. Everybody knew that Ebrahim was the murderer. However, with bribery, he managed to stop the local governor from pursuing the case—particularly the case of a victim who had no one to seek revenge.

Mulla Azam, a cousin of Hamid, took custody of his family, including the widow of Hamid's son, Bakhtu, who was famous for her beauty in the village. When

he was alive, many suitors came to Hamid, asking to marry the widow, but he always wanted her to make her own decision. Hamid had no other son to marry her to him, as was the custom. She resented Mulla Azam, Hamid's cousin. Before Hamid's death, she had accepted the marriage proposal of a nomad youth from the Alizai tribe. The youth had a tall figure, brown hair, and a whiter complexion than the villagers. Hamid treated him like his son. Bakhtu was embroidering a shirt for her fiancé for the wedding, which was approaching.

The village chief, Shir Mohammad, was a 60-year-old man, with gray hair and two front teeth missing. Even though he had a wife and children, he began to lust for possessing this 20-year-old girl. Mulla Azam made a secret deal with the chief who paid him 800 rupees for owning her. Of course, Bakhtu did not know this, and the chief was afraid of her fiancé. For the sake of precaution, he paid 500 rupees to the new local governor of Balabluk, Jamaladin Nangarhari, and with several armed men lurked around Hamid's house. In the afternoon, Azam told Bakhtu about her new husband. Accompanied by her mother-in-law, Bakhtu, holding a sword, left the house, heading toward her young fiancé. The chief and his men followed and caught her. She struggled to free herself, but to no avail. They held her by the hands and took her to the chief's village.

The following day, her young fiancé became aware of the incident and headed toward the chief's village, with a number of Alizai armed men. Armed Barakzai tribesmen also came out in defense of their chief. At this time, the local governor and a number of the village elders arrived and stood between the two hostile groups. A verbal claim began. The governor said, "Bakhtu is an unmarried free woman. She can choose her own husband. Nobody can prevent her." The Alizai youth said, "This is right. Bakhtu has accepted me as her husband." Chief Shir Mohammad also said the same thing. The governor said, "We, facing the two sides, will inquire from Bakhtu herself. Whoever she accepts will be her husband."

The governor, with the elders and the claimants, went to see Bakhtu. All this time, however, Barakzai men and women, holding the Quran as an interceder, had been urging Bakhtu to stop a bloodbath by marrying Shir Mohammad. "If you choose the Alizai youth, his people will draw their swords for this disgrace-the disgrace that Shir Mohammad caused last night by possessing you by force-and you will be blamed for the sin of all this bloodshed. If you choose Shir Mohammad, the Alizai people will leave and nobody will be killed." Bakhtu, while weeping before the public, cried, "Shir Mohammad is my husband. I know no other person." The Alizai tribesmen returned to their village and the Barakzai men laid down their arms. Since then, Shir Mohammad kept two guards for his protection, fearing revenge by the Alizai youth.

As days passed, the Bakhtu story, with the blood of Abdol Hamid, faded away. Our village took on its permanent tranquility and silence. Like others, we passed the winter days in the sun and the nights in our domed hovels. I had become familiar

with many poor and workless families in the village. I felt that the life of these people was more painful and sad than that of mine.

In the early spring, when the common cold and pneumonia broke out as usual, my brother, Mir Abdol Rashid Begham, a 27-year-old athletic youth began to show symptoms of pneumonia. He was bed-ridden. In order to save his life, I went to the local government office and requested a three-day leave to buy medicine from Farah city. Incidentally, the local governor understood my word, gave me an official leave, and assigned a guard to accompany me. I borrowed a packhorse from Mohammad Rasul, the only village merchant, and headed toward Farah. Several times a month, Rasul went to Farah and brought back German cotton, with red and black fabrics, to sell to the local people. They called him M. Rasul Soudagar (Rasul the Merchant). He was, of course, like everybody else in the village, illiterate and often made mistakes in calculating sale and purchase prices, in borrowing and lending. Mir Abdol Rashid, with a great deal of difficulty, taught him basic computation, such as addition and subtraction.

The next day I arrived in Farah city and spent the night at a caravansary. The following day, escorted by the guard, I began to look for local medicine. Suddenly, an officer, with a soldier, approached me and took me to the city security office. The security commandant, Sardar Gholam Haidar, asked me in a written investigation how I left my place of exile. I presented to him the official document I had received from the Balabluk governor. He ordered his guards to take "this fugitive" to the prison (Local people called prison "gharat" in Persian, which means destruction.). They put me in a dark room, with another prisoner already there. In the afternoon, they took me back to the commandant, who ordered two soldiers to take me back to Balabluk that night and hand me to the Balabluk governor because the deputy governor of Farah, Mirza Nur Ahmad, had received a telephone call from the governor of Kandahar, who was Sardar Mohammad Daud. The commandant punished the Balabluk governor with a three-day salary cutoff from his monthly pay and warned that he would send me back to Kabul if I left the village again.

Of course, I could not pick up the medicine I had bought from the store. We passed the night in a village. The next day we arrived in Balabluk, where I lived under more surveillance. However, the people learned more about the extent of our persecution and expressed more sympathy for us. This situation, however, made the government transfer us to Farah city, where we came under direct surveillance. My brother had recovered from pneumonia with home treatment.

Such pressure in exile forced another political prisoner by the name of Mirza Rahmatollah, an acronym writer, who was banished to Khost-Fareng in the north, to escape to Kabul, where he surrendered himself to the police to send him back to Seraye Muti, which he preferred to exile. However, Hashem Khan sent him back to Khost-Fareng to die in exile, but years later he was released.

In late November 1936, the government transferred me to Farah city, with the same surveillance and pressure. I had to report to the security twice a day. When I introduced my nine-year-old and six-year-old school age sons to the city primary school authorities, they refrained from admitting them. This made an unpleasant effect on my children. I knew what a complex this behavior would create in their subconscious minds. Nevertheless, I urged them to admit them at least as listeners, if not as regular students. They allowed them to attend school as listeners but dismissed them before the approach of school examinations.

One day, I visited the school. I noticed that the students in one room were squatting on their folded coats and vests because the floor was wet with water. The teacher, who was a shopkeeper, was teaching the students. The poor man was incapable of pronouncing even common words. Next to the classroom door was a clay pot filled with water and an ewer. This was a drinking pot for the students of the capital city of the Farah province.

The government, using an undercover agent by the name of Abdol Samad, was spying on me and isolating me from the public. My friend, M. Hosayn Farahi, was barred from visiting me. The government accused my other friend, Mohammad Rafiq, of having received money from me in return for allowing me to sit in his shop. He received a warning that his property would be confiscated if the case reached Kandahar. The poor man indirectly made me aware of the problem and regretfully stayed away from me.

In this way, I remained in Farah city until early 1938. On March 7, I was taken to Kandahar city, where after a while I met a number of political exiles: Haji Abdol Khaleq, with his father, mother, brothers, and children (Haji was once a staff of King Amanollah's mother); Mohammad Hafiz and Abdol Samad Paghmani, with their brothers and their families (the two men were members of the political party abroad); Abdol Sabur Ghafari, a prisoner of the Arg Prison, Gholam Rasul Terjaman, Gholam Haider Modarresi, Gholam Mohammad, Payنده Mohammad, M. Iqbal (photographer), Shir Ahmad (teacher), Gadai Mojadaddi, two sons of Malek Mir Alam Kuhdamani, some members of the family of Khaja Hedayetollah (killed); brother of Dr. Abdol Majid, a weaver, and a tambourine-maker. At this time, the negative but stable policy of the Afghan monarchy had begun to destabilize because the world was gradually moving toward World War II, plunging into another bloodbath.

At this time, within one year Kandahar saw four governors-Sardar Daud, Sardar Gholam Faruq Osman, Sardar Alishah, and Sardar M. Qassem-all of them from the Mohammadzai clan, replacing one another with new instructions. In Kandahar, I wrote a book titled *Ahmad Shah Baba*. Under the tight exile conditions and surveillance, it was not possible to discuss the economic and the social class conditions. Nevertheless, the Culture and Press Department, whose deputy president, Abdol Hay Habibi, considered its publication to be against the Afghan



interests, tampered with some sensitive passages of the book. However, he published certain creative parts of the book in his own book without mentioning the source.

Of course, at the time, this was not out of the ordinary. Mirza Nowroz, secretary of Nadir Shah, and later Sardar Najibollah, the education minister, had treated my historical writings in the same way. Nowroz censored my articles titled "Afghanistan and a View of Its History," before being published in *Majallah-e Kabul* (Kabul Magazine), and Najibollah omitted from my book *Afghanistan in a Glance* the section on the Mohammadzai period and replaced it by his own version. He did this because the original section dealt with the destruction of Afghanistan by the brothers of Fateh Khan and Amir Dost Mohammad Khan and because Najibollah was a grandson of Amir Dost Mohammad Khan. He had held high positions in the government: the political director of the Foreign Ministry, minister of education, head of the Afghan negotiation team on the issue of Pashtunistan with Pakistan, Afghan ambassador to India and the United States, and he was the chest of the state political secrets. Later, however, he settled in the United States and died there.

Coming back to the subject of the exiled dissidents, when World War II began, the economic crisis in the country intensified. Therefore, the government had to soften its policy of suppressing the dissidents in exile, while waiting for the end of the war to evaluate and revise its policy according to new circumstances. For this reason, it began to release the exiled dissidents toward the end of the war. Among those released was this writer who was called to Kabul in early 1944. However, the government, for many more years, continued its surveillance of members of the group and kept them isolated.

## **5- Social and Economic Conditions**

What was the shape of the economic conditions when the Nadir Shah regime gained stability following the Saqqao rebellion? The new regime discarded all of the positive measures and methods initiated during the Amanollah era. It restored the old feudal privileges, cancelled the constitutional law, opposed political freedoms, which had existed in a relative way, and equality of human rights. In an attempt to strengthen the medieval social order in Afghanistan, the regime attacked the national culture and stabbed the hearts of those fighting against foreign imperialism and internal tyranny. After the assassination of Nadir Shah, the new regime rigorously followed the old policy of suppressing the campaign for freedom. It also prevented development of national industry by adopting a policy of following British imperialism.

A number of major Afghan capitalists and merchants, who showed their true character during the Nadir Shah era, supported the regime in return for receiving trade privilege, monopoly, and establishing companies and banks. The upper layer of this class took part in the regime's power politics. This group was led by Abdol Majid Zaboli, an experienced merchant, who, in partnership with the ruling family, had the export and import monopoly. The unlimited profit he gained from the domestic trade and foreign trade monopoly made him depend on both the regime and foreign imperialist powers. He and others, who turned the country into an import market of foreign goods and an export market of raw materials, did not advocate investment in domestic industry or basic economic reforms unless it facilitated their own enterprise.

Obviously, the regime had formed an "unholy alliance" with a number of major merchants and capitalists, whom the regime involved in its own trade and in shares of companies and banks. The merchants and capitalists were helped by major provincial chiefs and landowners to buy lands in villages. The alliance was formed to plunder the country materially and spiritually. Although the activities of these entrepreneurs and merchants developed capitalism in Afghanistan, it and its allied provincial major landowners posed obstacles to social development in the country. The group offered bribe, gifts, interest-free loans, shares, and partnership in its profiteering trade. Members of the group also offered children and women of the ruling family luxury clothes, furniture, appliances, and gifts brought from abroad, on their engagements, weddings, and circumcision parties and other such occasions. Finally, Abdol Majid Zaboli and his gang, with Prime Minister Hashem Khan and his family and cronies, became a double-edged sword piercing the material and spiritual heart of the nation, with Hashem Khan being the political and administrative edge and Zaboli as the economic one.

Along with the dictatorial policy, what was the effect of this economic system? In cities and villages, farmers began to lose their lands. A farmer, with a small

farmland, had to lease it or part of it to pay the funeral or wedding expenses of a family member. The big landowners or rural money-lenders, who were waiting like scavenging wolves for a dead body, either leased the land or gave the bereaved family a loan with an annual interest of 50 to 70 percent. When the farmer was not able to pay back the loan or its interest, the lender, through the local government, forced the farmer to sell him the land. The transaction took place without auction because the local landowner and lender were in collusion not to disrupt each other's deal. Therefore, the lender priced the land of the bankrupt farmer. Farmers also lost their lands by other exploitive ways. For example, if a big landowner liked a piece of land owned by a farmer, who refrained from selling it, he would ask one of his henchmen to fabricate a court case against him. In such cases, the local government, as usual, favored the landowner and arrested the farmer. The prison expenses made his family sell the land to bribe him out of captivity. Then the landowner would buy the land for a very low price.

During the drought seasons and other natural disasters, the farmer, facing hunger, had to borrow money for survival. This emergency loan, with a heavy interest burden, would also make the farmer sell his land. Furthermore, the tax burden, forced labor, and bribery by local government offices had put so much pressure on him that he had no choice but to sell his cost-maintaining small piece of land and then work as a laborer or sharecropper for a bigger landowner. In this way, small land-holding farmers were losing their lands, while the average farmers tried to live between the farm losers and the big landowners.

The same thing was true in livestock, that is, the big herdsmen were prosperous but the average and small herdsmen were becoming poorer, thus adding to the camp of the unemployed and the real producers of the country. Could the cities and villages in the country provide work for this massive unemployed camp? The answer is no. The poor farmers, who made more than 90 percent of the population, lived in this situation. Agriculture was their main occupation, but no more than five percent of the arable land was available to them, and 30 percent of them did not have any farming land at all. In this underdeveloped country, the landowners for a nominal share could buy the farmers' work force, which was not more than a fifth of what they produced. Of course, the rather prosperous farmers still held about 10 percent of the arable land; the rest belonged to khans, landowners, merchants, and government bureaucrats. The country's economic and administrative conditions had a poisonous effect on the material and moral life of the Afghan people.

In the capital and other cities, small merchants, plebian intellectuals, teachers, low-paid government employees, workers, servants, and the unemployed did not have a better condition of life than those in cottage and machine industry workers or villagers. The flood of the import of foreign goods had ruined the country's domestic products, including cottage industry. Weavers, shoemakers, coppersmiths,

blacksmiths, goldsmiths, and other craftsmen were losing their markets. The domestic industrial production, such as textile, footwear, sugar, etc, could not meet more than 15 percent of the country's needs. The rest of the industry, which was under the control of large commercial companies, was being converted to commercial workshops in a primitive way. Craftsmen received their raw materials from factories, which considered them as part of their work force. In the areas of agriculture, textile, rug products, workers were debtors to these companies. The small working class, not having unions, political organizations, insurance, and labor law, were being terribly exploited.

A small number of major capitalists, big merchants, and brokers had seized the whole export and import monopoly in the country, harming both the village farmers and the urban middle class and craftsmen. They also had a significant share in the political power and bureaucracy, controlling the government's important ministries and departments. Their political power had reached a point that even the old aristocrats, who depended on race and ancestry, bowed and looked to the new rich for help. The government transferred cases of trade issues from religious courts to a special trade court because the government represented the big business and wanted to strengthen its position in the country.

After Nadir was killed, his brothers, sensing the opposition's cultural and economic demands, resorted to a number of exhibitionist reforms to deceive the public. However, the brothers did not allow these reforms to come to fruition. For instance, during the four years of his reign, Nadir Shah reduced the number of Afghan students from 80,000 (during the time of Amanollah Khan) to 4590. After the assassination, Hashem Khan, during the next four years, increased the number to 18870 students. The number of primary schools, secondary, high schools-with one college -increased from 35 to 228 and the numbers of teachers increased from 165 to 833. However, the government reduced the primary school period from five to four years, so that students could not acquire even elementary literacy. (See *Afghanistan during the Past Fifty Years*). Of course, the government still considered the education of women as heretical. It established a faculty of sciences (1936), with Pashtu Society (1937), a teacher training college, a technical school in 1937, and the Royal Library in Kabul in 1938. It also established four elementary schools in Herat in 1936, and royal library in 1938.

In the meantime, the government sent a number of military students to Turkey to study aviation and 26 other students to Europe and the United States to specialize in different fields. It established a political science institute in the capital. Pashtu became the medium of instruction in the schools, but without sufficient Pashtu teachers and textbooks. Furthermore, Pashtu was not the native language of students in northern, central, and western parts of the country.

As the government was intentionally harming the national education and culture, the servile newspapers and the newly established Kabul Radio constantly

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talked about increasing progress in Afghanistan, while the government police and spy network were relentlessly implementing destructive imperialist plans in the country. The schools exercised a blind military discipline, exposing the students to fear and terror and forcing the young graduates to serve the government.

In prisons, the government subjected both the guilty and the innocent to various types of torture. It rewarded the oppressive and corrupt governors but discharged or reprimanded moderate and harmless officials. The Afghan society was being driven more and more to the brink of poverty, division, and despair. The fire of religious, linguistic, sectarian and ethnic discriminations was raging.

Nevertheless, the superficial reform by the Hashem Khan government was not restricted to education and the press. It also established a number of hospitals in Gardiz (1935), in Konduz, Baghlan, and Kabul (Aliabad Hospital). It also established a female sanatorium (1936) and a dental course in Kabul. The Andarabi road from Shahi Doshamshirah Bridge to Shahi Bridge and the road from the Defense Ministry Road to Arg-not more than a few hundred meters – were cobbled and asphalted. It took the government five years from 1933 to 1938 to complete these projects.

Hashem Khan also tried to take advantage of trade profit. With the establishment of a share company, a foundation for trade development was laid during the Nadir Shah government in 1930. In 1933, the government established in Kandahar the Pahtun Sherkat-e Sahami (Share Company). In 1940, Hashem Khan bought the Jabal Seraj Textile Factory (established in 1937). A year before, the Watan Company was established in Kandahar. Only a few factories were established throughout the country: The Jabal Seraj Textile Factory (1937), the Konduz Oil Exploration Company (1939), the Polkhomri Textile Factory (1940), the Kandahar Wool Factory, the Kandahar Electric Factory (1943) and the Baghlan Sugar Factory (1938). A textile share company was established in 1936.

One year before the end of World War II, when I returned to Kabul from my exile, I could hardly recognize Kabul and its residents. During the Eid Holiday, only one out of a hundred persons could afford to buy new clothes. Private guest houses and seasonal parties had dropped out of the common language. The government had banned all entertainment, such as wrestling, stick dancing, storytelling, and all other seasonal festivities. One could not hear any song and sound of music coming from any village. Most of the Kabul singers and musicians had opened food and firewood stores in the old Kharabat section of the city. I witnessed honorable men stretching out their hands, with embarrassment, begging in dark evenings; I saw workers and low-paid officials carrying buckets to the public bath furnaces to buy cheap ember to keep warm their wives and children in the cold winter nights.

The regime enjoyed seeing the people's misery – the same people who once obliterated thousands of foreign invading soldiers. With this imposed poverty, the regime was driving the youths to moral depravity, theft, gambling, and, if possible,

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spying. With these conditions, when work and decent work facilities, together with factories and institutions, were not available; when there was fear and administrative tyranny; when men, wearing shabby clothes, with shabby beards – with their women, wearing torn chadors, and children, barefooted and hungry – were wandering in search of a piece of bread and returning home hungry at night-even at this time it was not possible to talk about the British cruelty, about the crimes of the British Indian agents inside the country, about the corruption and tyranny of the regime. Even the army officers and lower-rank officials, whose lives depended on what their superiors reported on them-the intelligence service by a report had their lives in its hand-had to act as personal servants for their superiors and to act more subserviently than convicted criminals. Indeed, personal dignity, self-respect, and responsibility meant nothing to the government-only subordination to superiors! In general, the people, deprived of all their rights, felt frightened, sad, disappointed, as if a foreign army had occupied their country and deprived them of their will.

The government crushed popular uprisings against tyranny and exploitation in Zamindaower, Kandahar, Safi, and Nanagarhar, with similar uprisings in the northern provinces. It suppressed the Ghaljayi tribesmen and the people in Paktia, Kuhdaman, and Kuhestan for the same reasons. Many felt how a corrupt economic system, with a tyrannical and regressive political system, was turning within a short time a mature and growing society, at least in the cities, into a disappointed, pessimistic, and confused multitude. The monarchy implemented all this material and spiritual decadence within 15 years, particularly in the capital. Some from the new generation saw all of this misery as something inevitable, moving unconsciously toward a dark and confused future.

The country did not belong to the people anymore. It had become an arena of games for the ruling family, the Indian imperialist spies, the big merchants and landowners, the high-ranking officials, and the government intelligence agents. Many illiterate men, particularly those wickedly collaborating with the ruling establishment and sometimes with foreign power, were derisively stamping on the honor and dignity of the Afghan people. They had grown so bold in their actions that they-such as Dr. Faqir Mohammad, a veterinarian, Ali Dost, a brigadier general from India, and others-openly invited Afghan military officers and influential figures of a central province in Afghanistan to serve a foreign country. Those who refused to respond to the call were expelled from their official posts or put in prisons, as it happened to Lt. Gen. Seyyid Hassan, Brig. Gen. M. Omar, Deputy Commander Seyyid Ahmad, Gholam Nabi Chapa Shakh, Lt. Gen. Fateh Mohammad, Ebrahim Gaw Sawar, and others.

In coincidence with these dark days in Afghanistan, World War II was blazing in a large part of the globe and the destiny of the East and the West depended on the outcome of the war, including that of Afghanistan, which its government was making new plans for the purpose of outlining a new approach in its foreign and

domestic policies. In either case, the ruling family, after fifteen years of purges, decided to apparently reconcile with the people and perpetuate itself with deceit and demagoguery rather than force. The government was expecting that, after one third of the century, the old generation was gone and the new generation would become accustomed to the new regime.

However, the monarchy did not want to implement this new approach quickly, fearing reactions by the people. With intangible gradual steps, it wanted to change its old methods. As usual, the Cabinet and even Hashem Khan ruled until the end of the war. As planned before, Hashem Khan, with his aides, stepped aside, leaving his place for the younger members of the family, which had decided to be the first to have the initiative. For the same reason, the government refused to give a chance to anybody to rise to fame, regardless of his dedication to the monarchy and his participation in its schemes. On the one hand, the government was sounding the anthem of fascism, celebrating its history, and claiming supremacy for the Arian race, in anticipation of possible victory by the Axis Powers. On the other hand, it was talking about Western democracy in anticipation of victory by the Allied Powers. Altogether, it was concerned about the collapse of the British Empire, on which a number of reactionary governments in Central Asia had relied. Finally, the war ended, with the crucial defeat of the German Nazi and Italian fascist dictatorships in Europe and the capitulation of the Japanese military dictatorship in Asia. The year 1945 brought to the world unprecedented changes and international inclusiveness.

## **6- Afghanistan during World War II (1939-1945)**

In Europe, following World I and the Warsaw Treaty, new and significant events were taking place. They had an inevitable impact on the fate of the East, which was being drawn to the brink of another war. Among these events was the economic crisis, threatening Europe, as well as America, which was sinking in the crisis. On the other hand, the countries that were defeated in World War I were gaining strength now. With a number of other powerful countries, they wanted to gain a new sphere of influence in the world through another war. The European extremist nationalist spirit-nationalism based on defending the motherland changed into materialism for invading another land-showed its ugly character and it gave rise to new dictatorships in Europe. Henceforth, the terms humanity and humanism had lost their real meanings in the new political dictionary of the world, particularly as Hitler and Mussolini regained their positions in the first row of world political players.

From the first day after World I, France, brandishing its sword, began to surround itself with iron and steel. The Japanese government by establishing the new Manchoko Empire was ready for another war. The Soviet Union was engaged in manufacturing weapons. The British government, having accumulated wealth exploited from other countries, had no need for another war. In fact, another war would threaten its wealth and supremacy. Nevertheless, it had to prepare itself for accepting another war since 1933. The United States, which was still engaged in solving its economic crisis, had a great military power and, by taking part in another war, it could change the destiny of Europe.

The existing mental and material circumstances brought Germany under the control of the fascist regime (national socialism or Nazism) immediately after its defeat in World War I, with one of the most dangerous and insane persons in the world ruling it. Adolf Hitler, with its Nazi party, led Germany-a rival of the British Empire in Europe and the world-to war, which unusually shook the world. The powerful Japan in Far East, the fascist Italy in southern Europe – both of which lusted for more territories – stood alongside Germany, plunging once again a flourishing part of the world into death and destruction, which at the end brought about their own defeat.

Although World War II is not a topic of this book, it is imperative to discuss its impact on Afghanistan. At the very start of the fighting in central Europe, the Afghan government feared the possibility of a great danger against itself and its close imperialist friends. On the one hand, Germany, as the enemy of Britain, had become relatively famous and popular among the Afghan people during the first war. On the other hand, the Afghan people, who resented the ruling regime, were waiting for an opportunity to rise again, as did the people of Jadran from April to May 1944. A year later in June and November 1945, the people in Konar in eastern



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Afghanistan rose against the regime. As in the past, the government, using modern weaponry, brutally crushed them.

With the invasion of the Soviet Union and the attacks on the American fleet by German forces, the destiny of the war changed, with the defeat of the invading Axis Powers becoming inevitable. During the war, the Allied Force temporarily occupied Iran. In India, the desperate struggles of the nationalists had not yet borne fruit. Afghanistan remained practically besieged under the British influence. Under these circumstances, the Afghan government was not in a situation to oppose the public opinion by publicly supporting the British government.

World War II erupted in September 1939 and on August 1940 Afghanistan declared its neutrality in the conflict. Therefore, the German citizens working in Afghanistan remained in their positions. The British government had intended to expel them by the Afghan government, but the latter could not take the risk of adding to the public dissatisfaction. However, the government was looking for a way out. In 1941, M. Yaqub Scout established a provocative political link with a number of German employees. The Germans, led by Scout, escaped from Kabul to Paktia to become engaged in counter-British activities on the eastern frontier. The government's reserve forces surrounded them in Lugal and wiped them out. The government jailed Scout in Kabul and released him later. After sometime, he went to Pakistan, where he, speaking over Pakistan Radio, attacked Afghan policy on Pashtunistan. In Kabul, his brother did the opposite: he preached antagonism against Pakistan, thus keeping this verbal political war aflame.

At any rate, the escape of a few Germans from Kabul offered a good excuse for the government to expel all German citizens from Afghanistan. However, the Afghan government could not by itself undertake such a task; therefore, it convened the traditional Grand Jirga or council in Kabul in 1941. The convention of such councils helped the government embark on its class policy, but Britain and the Soviet Union had already sent their proposals to Kabul, demanding the expulsion of all German citizens. The Soviet Union in its proposal had relied on the neutrality and non-aggression treaty it had signed with Afghanistan in 1931. The Grand Council in November 1941 reaffirmed Afghanistan's neutrality in the war. In compliance with the British and Soviet proposals, Afghanistan in October 1941 expelled the German citizens from its soil with assurances for their safety from both countries.

As the war continued, with its crucial outcome still unknown, the British political dominance was increasing through Hashem Khan to prevent any disruption in the country. As usual, the British had also put the ruling family under great pressure. One day, a film about the victorious German battles against the Allied Powers was displayed under the mask of neutrality at the Defense Ministry theatre. The next day, the British military attaché, riding a bicycle, without a prior notice, stepped into the office of Defense Minister Shah Mahmud, who was holding a

meeting with the army chief of staffs, M. Omar Abawi, and a number of officers. Addressing Shah Mahmud, the British military attaché said, "You say you are neutral, but you are showing the propaganda films of the enemy of Britain." He said this and left the office. Shah Mahmud remained silent without saying a word. The next day, the theatre was completely cleared for repair and never used for showing any film again.

One day Hashem Khan expressed anger over an unfinished building, which belonged to Allah Nawaz and who was absent at the time. An official in charge said that Shahji was acting on behalf of Allah Nawaz. Without hesitation, the prime minister said, "Shahji must be told to finish the building soon." Having heard these words, Shahji entered the office and angrily said, "I know my own duty; nobody in Afghanistan can give me instructions. The day I know I cannot perform my duty, I will shoot myself." While the prime minister tried to apologize for having been unable to communicate his words, Shahji ignored his words and left the meeting.

### **Spying Network**

Furthermore, the British Embassy obtained the prime minister's approval for establishing a British spy network under the embassy supervision in Kabul during the war. The network, which consisted of 10-member units formed from simple and ignorant Afghan villains, began its activities in important areas in major cities, along public roads, and towns. Each unit supervisor called dabbashi had to be literate. Members of the network received their monthly allowances from officials and representatives of the British Embassy, while the Afghan government protected them and allowed their activities.

Members of each unit were responsible for monitoring events in their areas and reporting to their supervisor, who then reported to the embassy. The assignment appeared to be easy and simple at first. For instance, a spy would report to his supervisor the passing of an airplane, the arrival or passing of a traveler or official, the opinion of a person or group about the war and the warring sides. Later, however, the network expanded and changed into a regular spying and counter-spying apparatus to such a degree that it even became a hostile apparatus against Afghanistan.

By this unusual act, Hashem Khan placed Afghanistan under the enemy's dominion and threatened the country's national morality for a long time. At first, nobody knew about this silent and secret treason except the ruling family and important agents of the British espionage. Later, however, Abdol Hosayn Aziz, a member of the ruling family-whose son, Abdol Hay Aziz, joined the Watan Party and was put in prison with 12 other party members in 1952-revealed the secret to this writer. A rumor about this issue had already spread among the intellectuals.

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The British spying network remained in Afghanistan after the closure of the German Embassy in Kabul in May 1945 and even after Britain left India in 1947. Since the Indian treasury was no longer in the hand of the British, the state of Pakistan inherited the network, complete and intact.

At a political prison in Kabul, I met in 1952 one of the network's local spies named Mirza Hosayn, who was concerned about his future. During the political tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan, he said he would enter the Shahr-Nau Park and sit behind the garden wall across the Embassy of Pakistan pretending to be pissing. At the same time, a dog would come out of the embassy, run into the garden, and return quickly. The dog always wore a folded leather leash. One day the movement of the dog attracted the attention of the Afghan undercover police, who were monitoring the embassy. Finally, they caught Mirza Hosayn and the dog, with his report inside the leash, and handed him to prison. It became evident that Mirza Hosayn was a member of the same British spying network now serving Pakistan.

Anyhow, Hashem Khan put Afghanistan under so much surveillance during the war period as if it were part of the war zone or part of British India. Agents of Afghan intelligence service were present at all transportation stations. Traveling inside Afghanistan required personal investigation and official permission. For example, M. Saleh Mojadaddi was dragged out of the bus he was riding from Kabul to Lugal to inspect his land. Likewise, Mir M. Shah Sadeqiyar was not allowed to go to Kandahar to for his son's wedding.

In this political and administrative environment, I received an order in 1944 to leave for Kabul from my exile in Kandahar. For ten years, I was away from the center of the country's politics and administration. The sight of the new atmosphere, which was the result of 14 years of planned destruction by the British colonial politics and the exploitation policy of the monarchy, was like a fiery arrow striking the heart and mind of the observer.

The direct effect of tyranny and foreign colonialism was intensely visible on the material and spiritual life of the new generation, particularly the intelligentsia. A number of youths, who were raised in these corrupt social conditions, were driven with deception or treachery into reconciliation with the ruthless and regressive regime. No youth was taken to task for triviality and lack of interest for his duty and country except for involvement in politics. While the government had suppressed or annihilated the campaigning opposition elements throughout the country, it was showing those who had escaped the sword to the old and the young as a warning lesson and as a representation of stupidity and madness.

The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Defense were employing only those, as their first choice, who, like the army soldiers, avoided politics and, like a blind Brahman, worshipped the princes. In return, of course, the door to progress in domestic and foreign posts was open to them, and they had full freedom in selecting their jobs,

particularly, if they had established contact with a member of the royal family. On the other hand, a group of political brokers had the duty to trap, with persuasion and deception, innocent, honest, and inexperienced youths. For example, Salahadin Saljuqi, the president of the Press Department, who was later promoted to ambassadorial and ministerial positions, recruited impeccable, educated, and talented youths, who were poor and needy. Gradually, however, under the name of reforming the country, he introduced, with written proposals, some of them to the government. With the same proposals, he introduced the deceived ones to Hashem Khan, or to his cousin and assistant, Naim Khan. After some time, they would be like captives, who had to dance to the music of the government. Of course, those who rebelled did not have a bright future. They had to live in obscurity, barely surviving. The government was no longer able to blast them to pieces from cannons or crowd them into prisons, particularly at a time when the government offices, the army, the ministries, and the industrial sector needed new educated cadres.

As a result, a distinct line was drawn between the monarchy and the intelligentsia, on one side of which were top pro-regime officials. On the other side was a neutral group, which, as an official service tool, lived without corruption, but it never moved up. The dissident group had a different destiny and was gradually suppressed and finally driven out of the scene.

Instead, the ruling family had turned the political scene in the country into a horse race for khans, landowners, big merchants, itself and the families bought by the government, and local and Indian spies. The market of bribery, smuggling, and plundering was hot. During World War II, the prime minister through Gholam Jailani Sadeqi, president of transportation; M. Zaman the Warped Mouth, president of the Trade Company; Abdollah Malekyar, governor of Heart (these three were Hashem Khan's foster sons and became millionaires) was exporting into Iran goods that worth millions of afghanis, and Abdol Majid Zaboli was depositing under Hashem's name in American banks millions of dollars from the sale of Afghan exports, while women in Badakhshan did not have clothes to cover their bodies, Safi women in Nangarhar wore animal skins, women and children in the province of Balkh and Herat were forced by the droughts of 1943 and 1944 to feed on grass, and the unusual cold in winters of 1944 and 1945 had driven both animals and people to huddle in caves.

Instead, the palaces owned by the royal family, the big merchants, and the aristocrats looked like Parisian ballrooms and Monte Carlo casinos, with some entertaining clubs being their second homes in Europe and American. At this time, a rumor in Kabul said that the savings of Hashem Khan and the royal family in America and Europe amounted to millions of dollars, pounds, and francs. Of course, under the bayonets of the military government, nobody could ask: Why and from where?

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With this oppressively economic and political atmosphere that the three brothers had created, despotism was choking the people. The monarchy feared popular reactions against its oppression, particularly as the war was escalating and its outcome was still unknown. Nobody knew what would be the future of the British government in its colonies, particularly in India. In case of the British defeat in the war, the Afghan monarchy would lose its supporter. What types of internal and external events would it face? However, the monarchy planned a new precautionary strategy in order to protect itself. Fearing a mass revolt, the monarchy used a tactic of carrying out its plans in such a way to portray the inevitable changes in its strategy as voluntary. Anyhow, Hashem Khan took the following steps during the war:

In the education area, from 1938 to the end of World War II, within a period of seven years, the number of school students increased from 19,000 to 94,000. The Pashtu language, which was the mandatory medium of education for all provinces, was now restricted to Pashtu-speaking provinces. The elementary education period, which was reduced from five years to four years, now extended to six years. School curricula and education rules underwent changes, and the establishment of female schools was taken into consideration. Elementary school teachers, principals, and inspectors were given food grain coupons. With the establishment of a shariah school in 1944, mullas were asked to adjust themselves to the demands of the new government policy. Although the prime minister was strongly against female education, the existing trend forced him to establish in 1941 the first secondary female school in Kabul. In 1944, the government established the faculty of letters and Pohan-e Nandari (theatre) in Kabul, and it transferred the bones of Seyyid Jamaladin Afghani from Istanbul to Kabul for official burial. However, if Jamaladin Afghani had been alive before the war and fallen into the hand of the prime minister, he would have been fired from a cannon mouth. From the start of the war in 1939, the prime minister established the Independent Information Department, with its various branches, to contain the young writers and keep them busy. A commerce school was also established in Kabul.

In 1941, this great butcher posed as a Red Cross sister by establishing a house for beggars. He assigned his nephew, Mohammad Naim, to work not only as deputy prime minister and minister of education but as leader of the press, scholars, poets, writers, and artists in the country. His mission was to keep this deprived opposition group engaged in scholarly, literary, historical, and artistic activities, and prepare for a display of the love of the ruling family for knowledge, arts and literature. The government also recalled the political exiles to Kabul from remote parts of the country and adopted a soft and accommodating policy toward the political prisoners.

For a tighter control of the country, the prime minister in 1941 upgraded the Kabul Police Directorate to Kabul Police Department under the command of a police general. In 1944, he established the Gendarme and Police School. According

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to a treaty with Britain, the government in the same year sent 200 Afghan officers to British India for study. It also bought 648 trucks from the United States. Subsequently, British experts were employed at Ghazi School, Kabul Radio, and Afghan Textile. In 1939, the female hospital was established in Kandahar.

The Second World War, which ended with the defeat of the fascist states, had profound changes in the world. An unusual countless number of human beings were killed in the war. Many cities and villages were devastated. The world political map changed, with a number of the world great states giving their places to other great states. On the other hand, scientific inventions reached the threshold of the Atomic Age. In the West, the United States-not Britain-ranked first. In the world arena, the United States and the Soviet Union emerged as superpowers, with the socialist China beginning in 1949 to play a major role in the East and the world.

Among the most significant post-war changes were: the weakening of the colonialist powers, the increasing victories of national liberationist movements, the emergence of the powerful group of the socialist states, and the acceleration and expansion of democratic and revolutionary campaigns. All of these had significant effects on the East, including Afghanistan. After the war, imperialism and old colonialism partly disappeared and partly weakened, with a number of colonial countries gaining their independence. Of course, colonialism and imperialism, assuming a new shape, did not go away completely. At the vicinity of Afghanistan, European colonialism ended, with India and Pakistan gaining their independence and the foreign military forces leaving Iran.

Afghanistan, located on the crossroad to Central Asia, could not remain separate from these changes. At this time, Afghanistan, coming out of confinement, had to reshape its political structure and change its old programs in terms of both domestic and international economic and political conditions and realities. However, the ruling class and the regime could not and did not want to implement this needed restructuring more durably and completely to the benefit of the people. Certainly, a government has an essentially heavy and crucial responsibility for its people. How unfortunate is a people when its government is neither honest nor competent! The motto that a nation deserves the kind of government it has, applies to a people who are free to choose their own government, not to a people on whom a government has been imposed with force and deception. The current monarchy in Afghanistan is such an imposed government, which has intentionally driven the Afghan people toward regression and superstition.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Change in Social Conditions & National and Democratic Capaigns (Shah Mahmud's rule, May 1946 – Sep. 1953)**

#### **1- The Government of Purgatory**

**(Decline of Hashem Khan's Rule and Emergence of Zaher Shah)**

The escalation of the economic crisis during World War II was a major cause for the Afghan government to take reform steps. During the war, food prices were always on the rise. The food scarcity, with the rise in prices of imported industrial goods, was acutely tangible. For the first time in 1946, wheat was imported. The deteriorating economic condition, coupled with the political oppression, caused profound dissatisfaction among the people. It manifested itself in the uprisings of tribesmen and farmers in 1945 and 1946. On the other hand, the increasing power of the socialist countries and the liberation of colonies, with the triumph of democratic and liberationist movements in many countries, which had weakened the colonialist powers, including Britain, caused a change in the Afghan domestic and foreign policies. The war was still raging when the ruling family was making new plans for its future. Fearing a backlash against its seventeen years of tyranny, the regime was now planning how to perpetuate itself in the wake of possible British departure from India. The regime planned to adjust its old unilateral foreign policy and accept a mild and compromising domestic policy, with slow development in economic and social conditions. However, the ruling family, with its foreign advisors, had advocated a strategy of gradual change, so that the government's rush would not give the people an impression that the new reform was an obligation, not a gift of mercy on the part of monarchy.

To accomplish this goal, Zaher Shah, taken out of his political and administrative isolation, was inaugurated, with great fanfare, as the active power center. To show that he had full power, it was told that he had endorsed the resignation of Hashem Khan against his wish (1946). The appointment of Shah Mahmud as prime minister, with his new soft and warm approach, was also attributed to King Zaher's will and policy. Of course, Shah Mahmud was masquerading before the Afghan people. The old butcher had forgotten the massacres he had perpetrated in the past. In this way, domestic and foreign media began to present King Zaher' heroism.

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The new program was based on new values since the British government was no longer the master and guardian of India; and a strong and independent Afghanistan, was no longer impeding the Indian interests. Britain and the government were now more concerned over the gap resulting from the British absence in India. Therefore, the regime had to bring reforms to all of its social, economic, and political affairs, including political freedom and equal constitutional rights. Obviously, these reforms were not lasting and deep. The main problem in changing the old programs and carrying out the new partial reforms was that they countered the ruling family's interests, and it was almost impossible to mix the two interests-the national and the royal. Since its emergence, the monarchy had fought for its own interests against the national interests and goals; therefore, there was no mutual trust between the nation and the monarchy. The material and spiritual devastation caused to the nation by the monarchy during its rule needed three decades for repair.

It was this conflict of interests that smeared and complicated the reforms, which did not produce desirable results in proportion to the amount of energy and money spent. This problem was also evident in all administrative and economic sectors, in which the government preferred the ruling family's interests to those of the people. For example, the ruling family owned land and marketed its products; it had shares in banks and companies, and it profited from trade deals. So it protected the landowners and big merchants against public interests. To protect its interests, the regime also positioned at the top a number of mullas who served and supported only the monarchy. In return for their support, they could serve their own interests by encroaching on the public interests. In this way, reforms, plans, projects, and institutions became a plundering treasure for the royal bunch, with a new class of wealthy barons and bureaucrats emerging in society.

However, corruption and intense political and economic pressure, imposed on the nation since Nadir Shah's reign, caused some backlashes. The economic pressure drove the people from a state of contentment and resignation to hard work for earning their living. The monopoly and concentration of wealth in the hand of a privileged class awakened class-consciousness among the people. The political pressure and despotism by the government caused them to resent the monarchy. Overall, the vast majority of them became disgruntled and skeptical, with their consciousness for a political revolution growing. The terms "revolution" and "republic" were no longer strange to the people, as the subject of land reform had existed in their minds as something desirable. Although Afghanistan was still far away from a stage of social revolution, the intense pressure by the monarchy was pushing the people toward democratic campaigns, thus paving the path for a greater social revolution. After Hashem Khan was removed from power by the turn of events and political necessity, a number of his important and effective colleagues-such as Allah Nawaz, Shahji, Mirza M. Shah, M. Gol Khan Mohmand, Abdol



Majid Zaboli, and Faiz M. Zakriya-apparently left the arena. Of course, none of them was in need of money or position because each of them, in return for his "services" for the government, had now become a great millionaire, who could live like an Indian rajah.

The Indian Allah Nawaz was now living in Switzerland, living a luxury life with the massive wealth he had accumulated in Afghanistan. Of course, he could freely visit the country, with his position reserved at the court. His sons, in place of their father, being treated like honorary princes, held important posts in the government. Similarly, Faiz M. Zakriya cashed his assets and bought a palace in Lebanon. Periodically, he lived in America and Europe. For them Europe was a second home and Afghanistan a place for fun. Abdol Majid Zaboli also settled in America, while his son remained in Afghanistan to continue his father's trade. However, Shahji, M. Gol Khan Mohmand, and Mirza M. Shah died in Kabul, deprived of having a chance to have a life of pleasure abroad. Among the old Cabinet members, only Ali M. Khan Badakhshani remained with the monarchy because he was deeply involved in Afghanistan's secret politics and his advises were still put to action.

Hashem Khan suffered more than any other gang member did because he was condemned to remain in the country for the sake of precaution. For a dictator to live with self-imposed retirement in a country he ruled for years was worse than any kind of death, particularly at a time when he was threatened with old age and sickness. Worst of all, at this age he clearly perceived his position and knew what the people were thinking of him and his past deeds. These internal self-trials urged him to seek redemption for his past sins, like a criminal standing before the gallows. Therefore, this man of little knowledge started reading *Tafzir Hosayni* (an old interpretation of the Quran in Persian) because he could not read the Quran in Arabic. He often showed off before his visitors what he had learned from his reading. However, his reading of the Quran commentary did not persuade him to help the poor. Finally, he died and was buried naked in a damp grave, leaving behind a bloody chapter of his deeds in the history of Afghanistan.

After the war, which caused a change in the balance of world powers, Hashem Khan was removed from the political scene, with his harmful program, so that the new program could be implemented. Zaher Shah replaced him to fill the gap. Henceforth, the hollow monarchy of the past changed to a boisterous one. The new program demanded that the new king, instead of the ruling family, take full charge of the administrative power in a gradual way. Therefore, the king in 1946 began to travel throughout Afghanistan to establish contact with the people in the provinces. He was apparently adopting a policy of reconciliation. In the capital, he also met constantly with merchants, officers, mullas, popular figures, and other individuals. One year later in 1947, the king pardoned 500 prisoners in Paktia, including the sons of Sadu Khan and Babrak Khan, who had opposed the monarchy. Before this,

the king had ordered the release of political prisoners in Kabul, including members of the Charkhi family. Gradually, Zaher Shah emerged as an all-powerful, non-responsible dictator.

The British government, which, through its colonial influence, was a major obstacle to social and economic progress in Afghanistan and to other Eastern countries, was now facing the decline of its imperial empire. It had to leave India in 1947. Three years later, it left the Suez Canal, Sudan, Iraq, and Persian Gulf. Henceforth, with the American support, the new British policy in Asia, Africa, including Afghanistan, was aimed at strengthening non-communist central governments. The Afghan monarchy took maximum advantage of the new British policy for stabilizing and strengthening its regime. The government, using both force and tolerance, became engaged in implementing its new program.

For example, when the people of Safi tribe, as a reaction against the regime's brutalities for the last 17 years, started an armed uprising, the government brutally crushed them. When Mohammad Amin, brother of Amanollah, moved from India to the eastern frontier area in 1949 to overthrow the monarchy, he was betrayed and defeated by Mirza Ali Pashtunistani known as Faqir Ipi, who was himself deceived. On the other hand, Prime Minister Shah Mahmud, unlike Hashem Khan, was pursuing a soft approach with the people and kept them engaged in small and insignificant reforms.

In May 1946, Shah Mahmud formed his Cabinet, which received its first warm admiration from the British Broadcasting Company. The BBC, broadcasting the news, remarked that the internal situation in Afghanistan was such that the post of the prime minister had to be in the hand of a royal family member. Anyhow, for the first time after so many years, a forced openness and smile appeared on the wrinkled, grumpy, and revengeful forehead and lips of the ruling family. The prime minister spoke about freedom, democracy, progress, reform, the people, and the youth; he even appointed some educated men in his Cabinet. Of course, the persons employed for the posts had to be passive in their social temperature-not too hot or too cold-something like water in temperature of 37 centigrade.

However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Defense Ministry were under the control of the ruling family and its important partners. Prime Minister Shah Mahmud, with his new soft approach and small reforms, was trying to reduce the old public animosity against the ruling family. In the foreign policy arena, he was apparently abandoning the negative unilateral policy by stopping to show concern over a rapprochement with the Soviet Union, so that he might prevent a domestic eruption and a foreign threat against the ruling family.

For the same reason, the government decreased mandatory purchase of grain from farmers and landowners. It apparently banned open torture in prisons. It declared free and secret local municipal and parliamentary elections. However, the government had not forgotten to strengthen the monarchy position among the rich,

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landowners, merchants, and particularly in the army. Shah Mahmud tried very hard to tell the people that the change in the old program had resulted from "the mercy and compassion" of the king and his family, warning that this "royal grace" would be withdrawn if the people acted ungratefully. Of course, the army, with a number of loyal officers, stood behind this threat. The monarchy had on its side a number of major army commanders and officers, who with high wages, cars, lands, and houses, and other benefits protected and worshipped the monarchy. Strict military discipline had divested the military of the courage to think about social issues.

When a group of Safi tribesmen in 1947 rose against the government tyranny and dire poverty, the same officers, using their modern weaponry, massacred the insurgents and received medals for their actions. The Safi women, with their breast babies, fleeing from the terror of the war, jumped into the Konar River. In Kabul, Abdol Rahim (Nayeb Salar or deputy defense minister), who had served the monarchy well, was arrested with his nephew, the poet Khalili, simply because they belonged to the Safi tribe.

Anyhow, the new economic and political demands, had forced the government to introduce certain reforms. Moving from pre-capitalist to capitalist relations, Afghanistan could not reject reformation. Even certain pre-feudalistic relations still existed in some parts of the country. For example, a segment of the population still led a nomadic life in a tribal and even patriarchal system. On the other hand, the impact of World War II had plunged the country's economy into a torrent of crisis. Exports had declined, consumer goods dwindled, prices went up, and the black market expanded.

Farming production went down in 1946. For the first time in its history, Afghanistan had to import wheat from abroad. Moreover, the intensity of the conflict of interests between the ruling class and the farmers, including the middle-income and lower-income merchants, was clearly tangible. All this was eclipsed by the public resentment of the rule and behavior of the monarchy. Therefore, the regime, almost deprived of the British direct and effective support in foreign policy, had to resort to some reform for its own protection.

Consequently, the ruling family decided to modify its foreign policy, modernize its administration, and introduce social reforms. Was the regime capable of implementing all this? The answer was no because the ruling family wanted every initiative to revolve around its own family and class interests. Furthermore, Shah Mahmud had the character and mentality of a nineteenth century aristocrat, devoid of the intellectual and political capacity of a twentieth century ruler. For this reason, his government was in limbo between the old regression and modernity. As prime minister, he failed to implement his government program. The economic and administrative convulsions, with the internal anarchy, persisted. For instance, in the economic area, the production of karakul skin from 1948 to 1952 declined from three million and four hundred pieces to one and half million pieces. At the same

time, the Afghan karakul price in the American market went down about fifty percent. Inside the country, grain production decreased and the cost of bread went up, while the inflation was rising and the unemployment was increasing. Hoarding, profiteering, black market in cities and villages drove the people toward poverty, while a number of big landowners, capitalists, and merchants kept plundering the masses.

How could Shah Mahmud and his ministers increase domestic production or prevent the flood of foreign economic influence while they had collectively restricted their efforts to strengthening the influence of landowners, capitalists, and big merchants in the regime? Therefore, neither their highly publicized social and economic plans materialized, nor did an estimated one million Afghan nomads settle, as they had promised. Nevertheless, the Shah Mahmud government did stick to a number of reforms and distinguished itself slightly from the Hashem Khan government. The following are the most important activities of his government:

The military government, pretending to be semi-democratic, changed to a semi-military regime. The government apparently banned open and barbaric torture in prisons and detentions. The Cabinet included a number of ministers from the educated class. More important than these were free elections for municipal and parliamentary candidates (1948-49). Led by a number of opposition intellectuals, the Seventh National Assembly passed the press law in 1951 and campaigned for the democratization of the regime. The new changes introduced in Kabul by the elected municipality included the construction of Maiwand Street, Nader Pashtun Street, Pamir Cinema, with a number of roads surfaced with asphalt in Kabul. For the first time in 1950, Kabul University students formed unions. The student political movement also started, but later the government suppressed it.

Female schools were established, expanding with the enrollment of about 6,000 girls. The total numbers of students in the country had exceeded 100,000. Kabul University and a number of secondary, vocational, and religious schools, were established in April 1946, and an increasing number of students were sent abroad. The government established in Kabul four boarding schools, which offered lessons in finance, management, literacy, handicraft, cooking, house management, etc. The Women Institute, which published a magazine called *Mirman*, was also established. The government also established a limited number of nomad schools, laboratories, libraries, handicraft exhibitions, and Kabul Kindergarten in 1949. More importantly, the old curricula of education were revised and improved, resulting in the abolition of the mandatory teaching of Pashtu in non-Pashtun areas. The government became a member of UNESCO (1948), participated in its conferences, and benefited from its programs.

With preventive medicine becoming part of medical treatment, the department of anti-malaria campaign and provincial hospitals expanded, with the publication of health magazines. The government made similar improvements in the

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judicial, transportation, communications, and other areas. It also established in the capital city post offices and an automatic telephone system. The government and the Soviet Union signed the radio and telegraph communications agreement in April 1947. The government started several other projects during the same period, including construction of Kandahar-Qalay-e Jadid Highway, establishment of Wadan Transport Company, and Judicial Training School, and Military Training School, construction funds (1948), etc. It also purchased a number of jet planes and introduced new judicial laws and guidelines. However, the government reform measures, lacking depth and breadth, did not have a tangible effect on the lives of the masses.

## **2- Economic Conditions**

The government took different steps in dealing with the food crisis and the constant rise in prices. It helped free trade by facilitating the concentration of capital. As a result, the Melli Bank quadrupled its assets, providing more activity for the middle and small merchants. At first, the government allowed free and secret elections for municipalities and the Parliament. During its first year in 1946, the new government, with the participation of major companies, built a trade center depot, breaking the monopoly of the companies on exporting karakul, wool, and other products and the monopoly on importing foreign goods. It also announced that trade was free under the control of the Ministry of Economy, and it formed a Cabinet committee to monitor commerce in consumption goods. The government also spoke about preparing a developmental economic plan.

In practice, however, the government failed to fulfill most of its plans. For instance, the depot that monopolized the sale of fabrics received 20 percent profit from the sale of fabrics to companies and individual merchants. Furthermore, the government ignored cases of corruption and embezzlement in the depot, which a committee of the Seventh National Assembly, including this writer, had investigated. Similarly, lifting the monopoly of companies on certain exports and imports could not reduce the economic convulsions because these companies had protected their privileged stance by relying on their large capitals, and they still, more or less, held subsidy privilege and foreign currency credits. They had fixed their eyes on trade markets-not on expansion of national industries. They were also in control of the few factories operating in the country.

For this reason, imports were constantly leading exports from 1947 to 1950, with continuing pressure in the currency and financing programs because the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Trade were in the hands of Abdol Majid Zaboli and his partners; therefore, the Committee for Re-organization of Foreign Trade could not end the country's chronic economic and trade ills. Until the collapse of the Shah Mahmud government, the promised economic plan did not materialize.

In the agriculture and husbandry areas, the government established the Animal Breeding Department and the Food Supply Department in 1947 in Kabul, with the Silk Producing Company in Paghman. In the same period, it built the Sarubi Electric Plant and a car repair factory in Kabul. The number of workers had reached forty thousand. The labor law, however flawed, was passed and enforced in 1946. The law also included the agricultural workers, servants, and craftsmen. In 1951, the tax law was enacted and the state budget had increased from \$340 million to \$540 million afghanis.

Nevertheless, the country's economic problems remained unresolved. For the trade capital and usury in villages had badly affected the farm production and forced

the government to import grain from abroad. The government, also incapable of adopting a consistent policy and limiting the flow of foreign monopolies, caused widespread public discontent. In order to reform the economic problems, it relied on foreign loans, while the economic projects, with the trade balance, foreign payments, money printing, and the inflation rate, should have been re-examined in proportion to their rates and taxes. However, the government, with its old system and lack of statistics, was not capable of balancing taxes with price indexes or increasing currency circulation and the volume of economic transactions. Therefore, the projects remained incomplete and prices went up. The currency problem also impeded the funding of the reform projects. To deal with this problem, the government in 1949 raised taxes on trade, craftsmanship, and cattle, and it added fifty percent to the custom taxes.

After tension with Pakistan and the closure of transit trade, Afghanistan's currency problems increased and the black market expanded. Obviously, the economic crisis had its effect on the country's social conditions. The government had pledged to settle more than one and half million nomadic people under the farming reform program. Since the government was opposed to fundamental land reform, it drove them to the north to settle on the lands of other people. By establishing the Settlement Directorate at the Ministry of the Interior, the government settled a number of people from the eastern provinces in the northern provinces and distributed among them the lands it had taken by force from the natives under the name of surplus acreage. This approach fueled differences between the peoples on the two sides of the Hindu Kosh range, thus harming the Afghan national unity. Instead, the government granted to the royal family (Shah Mahmud, Sardar M. Atiq, Ali Shah Khan, etc) thousands of acres reclaimed by digging the new Gawargan Canal north of the Hindu Kosh range (Baghlan). It sold the remaining acres to Aftab a-Din Khan, a wealthy landowner, and others.

### **The Helmand Project**

Shah Mahmud was eager to receive foreign loan, particularly from the United States, to improve the country's economic and agricultural affairs. The government had prepared in 1945 the ground for receiving foreign loan for financing a project for bringing under cultivation new lands in Helmand and Arghandab areas. In a proposal to Afghanistan, the United States was ready to undertake irrigation and road construction projects. As a result, Afghanistan signed a contract with Morrison & Kanudson in 1946. The two sides signed the contract before conducting a scientific survey of the area and before calling for tenders. Later, however, surveys and suggestions by domestic and foreign experts revealed that the unfavorable conditions of the land would not generate proper results and productivity. The

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contract stated that the irrigation and road construction projects would be implemented within three years at the cost of seventeen and half million dollars in Kandahar and in the southern part of the country. The project anticipated that 300 thousand hectares of land would come under cultivation and that 15 thousand Afghan farming families would be housed in the new area, with a significant reduction in the huge numbers of people living a nomadic life. However, in reality, after years of labor, with an expenditure of \$100 million, the project outcome for the poor people of Afghanistan was 30 thousand hectares of land, which provided for 1500 Afghan families only, and the rest was salt land. Reclaiming more land demanded more expenditure.

At any rate, for the first time, the United States took its first economic step into Afghanistan through the Morrison & Kanudson Company, but this first step did not benefit Afghanistan. It also harmed the fame that the United States had gained under its slogan of "freedom and independence for Asian countries" during the two world wars. After the end of World War II, at first a number of Eastern countries had welcomed the United States as the head of the Western world in place of the crafty old imperial European states because the Asian countries, particularly Afghanistan, were resenting the European imperialism. At first, the Afghan people viewed with hope the United States when it entered Afghanistan from the other side of the globe under the umbrella of the Helmand Project to help Afghanistan. They recognized the United States as the opposite of old European imperialists. However, after the failure of the Helmand project, the Afghan view of America changed to pessimism.

Afghanistan wanted the Helmand Project completed with \$17 million of the \$20 million it had earned during the war from the sale of karakul skin in the United States. At this time, the karakul market had moved from Britain to the United States. The government spent \$20 million within two years for the project, but it remained incomplete. The Shah Mahmud government, wallowing in the Helmand quagmire with the steering of M. Kabir Ludin (educated in USA), the minister of public works, and an Indian friend, Allah Nawaz, had to either abandon the \$20 million or to apply for more loans to complete the project. In 1949, an American export - import bank offered \$21 million loan for a 15-year term, with an annual interest rate of 3.5 percent, for financing the remaining expenses of the project, which was now in its third year. In 1950, the Shah Mahmud government signed with the company another contract, according to which it had to complete the project and build electric plants in Helmand and Arghandab by 1953. While the karakul price was declining in the American market from the average price of \$14.4 to \$8.00, the currency earned from the karakul sale went to the pocket of the Morrison Company in place of providing supply and industrial equipment.

Finally, the company's futile effort, with its increasing dissipation and squandering, coupled with the government's incompetence and lack of an



accounting system, drew the public attention to the government's inefficiency and the consequence of the American economic influence in Afghanistan. Therefore, the public voice, full of despair and resentment, rose in protest against both the government and the American company.

The voice became more pronounced at the hall of the Seventh Parliament, which was elected freely only once. The government had accepted the free election as a test. The Parliament reprimanded the government and questioned this type of expansion of American economic influence in the country. It considered the Helmand Project and the privilege granted to the Morrison Company as a government's political conspiracy for creating a base for the American influence in Afghanistan. Therefore, the Parliament decided that the ministers of planning, economic, finance, and public works should be put on trial and punished.

Subsequently, the Parliament proposed to summon Shah Mahmud and his Cabinet. These decisions by the elected Parliament were the first reflection of the public view against the government's actions. Of course, the monarchy, which was in control of the government, was not ready to tolerate the decisions of the people delegates. Therefore, the monarchy by its iron heel crushed the Parliament and its decisions. Henceforth, the people turned against this type of American economic influence in Afghanistan. What else one could expect from a great industrial country?

The industrial demands of the industrial world dictate such an approach. The enormous productions of the industrial countries need foreign markets, the most favorable of which are in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, which were under the military dominance of the great industrial powers before World War II. After the war, however, military dominance gave way to economic dominance because the great industrial countries were born out of industries, while the Third World provided both raw material and consumption of industrial goods. If the great industrial countries lose their sources and markets, their grandeur and glory will also fade away. Factories will close down and millions of people will face hunger. Inside the great industrial countries, there is concern and fear about the decline of the domestic purchase power and deficiency in natural resources. Therefore, the great and formidable economic institutions of the industrial countries resort to any means, good or bad, to prevent such crises even at the cost of creating regional wars or sometimes a world war.

Compelled by their economic demands, the powerful industrial countries keep the flow of their surplus goods under the name of trade and their surplus capital under the name of aid and loans into the backward countries. This economic policy hampers any crucial activity in the creation of economic infrastructures in the backward countries unless the industrial countries benefit from them. This is the responsibility of the peoples of developing countries to free themselves from the chain of depending on the great industrial countries, instead of complaining about

their economic policies. Otherwise, their deteriorating economic conditions will cause the deterioration of their social conditions, with their national interests sacrificed to the wishes of the powerful industrial Eastern or Western countries. Instead of exploiting their underground resources, expanding national industries, advancing culture and civilization, the developing countries squander their national wealth for buying foreign goods, while their exports are used as raw materials by the industrial countries. Their export prices will also decline in proportion to import prices because the world markets, as well as price setting, are, to some extent, under the control of the great industrial countries. For this reason, the buying power decreases in backward countries, driving society toward poverty, sickness, ignorance, and moral corruption.

Of course, industrial revolution and fundamental economic reforms—even the correct use of foreign capitals in backward countries—demand honest, competent, and nationally representative and mature governments, which must not fear political opposition by major industrial countries, and even foreign-sponsored coups. Powerful countries protect, with money and weapons, tyrannical governments in the Third World and overthrow national governments by coups and conspiracies. The drama of the wishes of these powers has unfolded in the bloody and tragic scenes in the Far East, the Near East, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. What crimes have Indonesia and Dr. Sukarno; Iran and Dr. Mossadeq; Iraq and Karim Qassem; Congo and Patrice Lumumba perpetrated against humanity that they had to be drowned in blood? All they wanted to do was to develop their national economy, strengthen their political independence, and remedy the wounds of imperialism in their afflicted countries.

At any rate, the efforts of the Shah Mahmud government in economic, agricultural, industrial, and in other areas were either nominal or largely failed. Contrary to his claims, there were no sufficient energy plants and no textile or food-processing factories. Land reform did not materialize either. The agricultural and industrial conditions remained unchanged, with farmers and craftsmen moving toward bankruptcy and dispossession. The number of the unemployed in cities and villages increased. As usual, the profitable import of foreign goods, the hoarding and profiteering market, with smuggling, persisted. Bribery and embezzlement were rampant.

At this time, the government in July 1950 signed a 14-item trade agreement with the Soviet Union. In February 1951, it signed an economic and technical agreement with the United States. In April 1952, the government established the Petrol Survey Institute, monopolizing the exploration. At this time, the Soviet Union offered \$8 million loan to Afghanistan to build oil reserves in Kabul and Mazar, an oil pipeline between Mazar and Termez, two silos in Kabul and Polkhomri, a hospital in Jalalabad, and some roads in Kabul.

### **3- Foreign Policy**

Until the end of Shah Mahmud's rule, the ruling family pursued a unilateral policy of relying on Britain and distancing itself from the Soviet Union. However, after the end of World War II when the international policy conditions changed in the world, the foreign and domestic policies of Afghanistan had to change too. The new policy, disguised as neutral, wanted expansion of relations with the United States and the Soviet Union, for the two superpowers had now replaced the British imperial power. Afghanistan, which had joined the World League on September 25, 1934, became a UN member in November 1946.

#### **Relations with the Soviet Union**

The Shah Mahmud government signed an agreement on border issues with the Soviet Union in the summer of 1946. In April 1947, Afghanistan approved the agreement on exchange of communications with the Soviet Union. In the same year, an Afghan delegation went to Tashkent to clarify the border demarcation between the two countries. In September 1948, the two countries signed a demarcation protocol. Both sides were also organizing their trade relations through the 1947 and 1950 agreements on exchange of goods and payments. In this way, the neighborly relations were silently and quietly continuing.

#### **Relations with the United States**

Afghanistan had established political relations with the United States on March 26, 1936, but it was in July 1942 when the United States opened its diplomatic mission in Kabul. The Shah Mahmud government signed the Helmand Project with the American Morrison and Kanudson Company in 1946. In 1948, Afghan and American diplomatic delegates were welcomed as ambassadors to Kabul and Washington. In 1949, an American exports and imports bank extended a \$21 million loan to Afghanistan, which then renewed the agreement with the Morrison and Kanudson Company.

In March 1950, Philip Jasup, a special envoy from the US president, arrived in Kabul. The trip took place when relations over the Pashtunistan issue became critical between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The American envoy had allegedly invited both Pakistan and Afghanistan to join a military pact. He had also proposed that Afghanistan should not support the Pashtunistan issue. When Afghanistan and Iran quarreled over the issue of using the Helmand River water, the United States, with Canada and Chili, entered the scene in 1952, but without producing any

result. Again, in 1951, US State Department Assistant Secretary Mack Gay arrived in Kabul to act as a mediator between Afghanistan and Pakistan, but this mission also failed.

In February 1951, the Shah Mahmud government and the United States signed an economic and technical cooperation agreement according to the Truman Point Four Program. In January 1952, the two countries signed a mutual security agreement. In June 1953, they signed a technical cooperation agreement, according to which the Afghan government agreed to provide Washington with details about receiving technical assistance from other countries or international institutions and to allow American advisors and specialists to work on agricultural, educational, health, transportation, and survey of mineral resources in Afghanistan. Since then, an increasing number of Afghan students began to study in the United States.

### **Relations with Britain**

Before the end of World War II, with the start of a new diplomacy in Afghanistan, British relations with Kabul took a new turn. In 1944, British teachers took charge of Kabul Ghazi High School, with British specialists also working at Kabul Radio, Kabul Textile Factory, and other institutions. After leaving India, the British government agreed to raise its diplomatic mission to ambassadorial level to Afghanistan (1948). However, all these new ties showed only the surface of the Afghan-British relations, while the half-century old spirit of confidential relations between the British government and Afghan monarchy was still alive, active, and effective in an invisible way.

### **Relations with Other Countries**

The Shah Mahmud government signed a treaty with Sweden in 1947. In 1949, it signed an aviation protocol with Iran. In 1950, it closed down the Guomindang (Nationalist People's Party) political mission in Kabul and in January recognized the People's Republic of China.

It also signed treaties of friendship with India, Indonesia, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. Cairo and Kabul raised their diplomatic missions to ambassadorial level. From 1947 to 1950, the dispute over the water of the Helmand River continued between Iran and Afghanistan, with the American-Canadian-Chilean mediation committee failing to settle the issue. The Afghan government warmly received an Iranian cultural delegation, led by Ali Asghar Hekmat, in Kabul in 1947 and later in 1951 supported the Iranian stand against the oil company.

### **Relations with Pakistan**

During this period, the issue of Pashtunistan and Baluchistan was the greatest political problem of the Afghan foreign policy in its relations with Pakistan. The conflict over the issue played an important role in Afghanistan's relations with its neighbors.

The campaign of the Indian liberation movement finally ended the British colonial rule. However, on June 3, 1947, India split into two parts: India and Pakistan, with Pashtuns and Baluchies, who had never stopped their campaign against the British pressure and influence, were still fighting.

From July 3-17 in the same year, Pakistan held a flawed and phony referendum in Pashtunistan. The Indian and Punjabi people, who had no connection to the Pashtun inhabitants of the Northwest Frontier province, took part in the referendum. The Pashtun liberationists boycotted the referendum when Pakistan kept out of the referendum several millions of Pashtuns beyond the Durand-Line up to the Sind River. During the voting, Pakistan put the Quran and the Hindu scripture before an estimated three hundred thousand voters to vote for one of the two groups. Obviously, a Muslim, with the majority, voted for Islam or for the Muslim group.

The purpose of the referendum was to make the voters choose between Pakistan and India. The third option, that is, to vote to join Afghanistan or for the independence of the area did not exist. Nevertheless, 52 percent of those who voted joined Pakistan in the name of Islam.

The state of Pakistan, consisting of Pashtunistan, Baluchistan, Sind, Bengal, and Punjab, was thus created on August 14, 1947. Pakistan was still weak, with the blood of many Muslims and Hindus shed over its creation. The state of Pakistan considered India a threatening power, with the Kashmir issue pouring new oil over the fire of animosity between the two countries.

However, the British government, which still controlled the Afghan and Quetta free frontiers, considered the strengthening of Pakistan's dominance in the region as a military base against the socialist world. For this reason, Britain introduced Pakistan as its successor in all of the Pashtun-populated areas between the Durand-Line and the Sind River. The minister of British colonies proclaimed in 1950 that Pakistan was inheriting the rights and duties of the British authorities in the areas beyond the Durand-Line. Furthermore, later the United States in the context of the SENTO recognized the Durand-Line as the official border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Britain and the United States were intent on building a security belt of Islamic countries from Istanbul to Kashmir to the south of the Soviet Union. In another military pact under the name of Pan-Islamism-which involved Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan-Britain and the United States also wanted to build an extended stronghold from northeastern Mediterranean Sea to the

Arab Sea. This, of course, demanded the organization and reinforcement of the newly created state of Pakistan. However, they planned this long and broad scheme in such a way that its implementation was bound to harm Afghanistan. That is, Afghanistan, as at the time of British occupation of India, was to remain dismembered and landlocked again. Fraser-Tyler in his book *Afghanistan* wrote:

*"It is indeed a strange feature of this complicated situation that there exists, like a canker in the body politic of northern India, this collection of "independent tribes, well armed, intractable and formidable, who may any time disturb the relations and disrupt the economy of either of the states in whose midst they dwell. It is an anachronism and a danger to the stability of northern India and the peace of Central Asia. The remedy is the fusion of the two states of Afghanistan and Pakistan in some way or other. It may be argued that, given the differences in mental and political outlook of the two states, such fusion is impossible. This may be so; I am in no position to argue the matter. But history suggests that fusion will take place, if not peaceably, then by force."*

*"These two states, closely integrated, prosperous and peaceful, would have a notable part to play as states, which stretch between the Bosphorus and the Pamirs. (Last sentence quoted by translator) But if they are not so integrated, if they are divided and torn by political and economic differences, by national antagonism and by the absurdities of the Duran-Line, then they will offer that condition favourable to revolution, which gives communism its opportunity."*

*"For whatever happens in northwestern India, there is one great factor in the political development of Central Asia, which is likely to increase in importance as time passes. Great areas in Russian territories across the Oxus are being developed and to some extent industrialized. This process will in time lead to a demand for access to the sea, for a port through which Russian merchandise can be exported to the market of the world, and through which imports may enter Central Asia. There is one port to which access can easily be obtained from the Russian frontier in Central Asia, and only, the port of Karachi. A railway line, running from Kushk on the Russian frontier by Herat and Qandahar to link with the Pakistan railway system, would encounter no obstacles save the River Helmand, till at Chaman on the Pakistan border the gauge is broken. Proposal by the Soviet Government for such a link with the outside world might easily and profitably be entertained if the States to which they were made were strong, friendly, and untied, and had behind them the moral support of the Americans and the British. But, if they were weakened by economic and political discords and unable to present a united front to the "barbarians" from the north, then once again the floodgates would open and the control of the Hindu Kush would pass into other hands."* (Pages. 299,300, and 301)

Anyhow, the Afghan government in its campaign against Pakistan over the Pashtunistan issue went soft, erred, and deviated until it benefited Pakistan.

The Shah Mahmud government unconditionally recognized the independence of the newly created state of Pakistan and accepted its embassy in 1947. The government's excuse for this untimely haste was based on the diplomatic contacts

with Britain over the Pashtunistan issue and on the British political signals given before the division of India. When Pakistan was created, the Afghan government discussed the issue with Britain, but it mentioned that "the Afghans between the Durand-Line and the Sind River should be given an opportunity in referendum to determine their own destiny." Both Britain and Pakistan welcomed the proposal because they could respond to it by a flawed, restricted, and conspiratorial referendum, and they did it, while millions in Afghanistan, Pashtunistan, and Baluchistan wanted an end to Pakistan's influence beyond the Sind River and called for the independence of Pashtunistan and Baluchistan from the bondage of foreigners. National and political bodies and individuals from Chitral to Baluchistan visited many times Kabul. Dirahjat and Peshawar, with local administrations of Qalat, Dir, Bajawor, and Chitral were in the first rank of the movement. The proposal about the referendum beyond the Durand-Line, more seriously, sounded as if the Afghan government had accepted the imposed Durand demarcation and had no claim for the reclamation of the occupied lands and, as a landlocked country without an outlet to the sea, it was satisfied with its current imposed boundary. Of course, this policy granted Pakistan the initiative in the political campaign.

Furthermore, Shah Mahmud in November 1947 sent a special envoy from the king to continue the talks in Pakistan. He was Najibollah, a grandson of Amir Dost Mohammad. He was an inexperienced youth. Even though he lacked experience and maturity, the government offered him high administrative posts because of his kinship with the monarchy. He held the post of the political directorate of the Foreign Ministry, the minister of education, and ambassadorial positions in India and the United States, where he abandoned his post and lived there until he died. Thus at this most critical and yet favorable historical opportunity, which had resulted from the war, with changes in the international politics, a major and vital issue of the country – the issue of Pashtunistan and Baluchistan – was entrusted with Najibollah. Unfortunately, it became practically evident that the honor and interests of the country, like an overflowing glass of water, was now in a trembling hand.

On this important issue, Najibollah was confronted with a pack of political wolves, which were well versed in the secrets of the colonial politics in Pakistan. Among them were M. Ali Jinnah, governor general; Liyaqat Ali Khan, prime minister; Sir Zafarollah Khan, foreign minister; Akramollah Khan, secretary of foreign affairs; Aqaye Shah, deputy foreign secretary; Sardar Abdol Rab Neshtar, minister of transportation; Gholam Mohammad, minister of finance; Abdol Qayum Khan, prime minister of the frontier, and others. These gentlemen engaged Mr. Najibollah in parties, meetings, and sporadic talks (Nov. 14, 1947-Jan. 1948)-they kept him flying from branch to branch-until they defeated and sent him back to Kabul, where he assumed a victorious pose. In Kabul, he stated the history of the talks and later published it in a book titled *Biyanat (Statements, 1948)*.

Having been unconsciously influenced by Pakistani statesmen, Najibollah wrote in his book: "Upon my arrival on the border, in Quetta and Karachi, and when staying and living in Pakistan, Pakistani officials welcomed me with great warmth, friendship, hospitality, and respect, which represented their friendly feelings and regard for the government and the people of Afghanistan, for which my government and I express thanks and appreciation." (P.39)

Najibollah was so besieged and politically isolated by Pakistani statesmen that during the entire time of his visit he did not contact anyone, not even the Afghans concerned on the issue. He wrote: "Here I have to say that I did not want to discuss our topics with our Pashtun brothers in Pakistan before starting the official negotiations and presenting the proposed treaty to Pakistan's Foreign Ministry. I did not want to talk about the subjects with our Pashtun brothers in Pakistan because I did not want to create the impression there that Afghanistan wanted to have contacts by secret means with the Afghans across the border." (P.65)

With this mentality, he entered into talks with Pakistani statesmen. He said, "We do not say that securing the rights, freedom, and identity of them (the Pashtuns) should result in harming Pakistan and its Muslim friends. The only thing we want is that the Afghans between the Durand-Line and the Sind River should form a country, with full autonomy, under a name that would represent their own ethnic identity.... We want that the legitimate freedom and independence of our free frontier brothers should remain secure and that they should not be put under military pressure and bondage. (We want) their relations with Pakistan to be according to the agreements, and the door for unity and oneness remain open with other Afghans or Pashtuns, who will be included in the autonomous Pashtun government, and they should be assisted to improve their material and intellectual standards of life... I also explained this point to Pakistani officials that they should not consider my references and suggestions, the views and measures of my government, to be interference in the affairs of Pakistan or against their prestige." (P. 51)

Of course, the proposal of Afghanistan's extraordinary representative, "His Majesty's special envoy," clearly meant that the Afghan government would not want Pakistan harmed by the independence of Pashtunistan; it would permit Afghanistan's free frontier areas to join Pashtunistan; it would accept the Durand-Line; it would not demand any concessions from Pakistan; it would want autonomy for the frontier province, as the Pakistan federal system also demanded, and in fact the system did exist. In return for all these losses, Afghanistan only asked Pakistan to give a name for the lands between the Durand-Line and the Sind River.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Zafarollah Khan, having found Najibollah defeated, wrote to him on January 1, 1948: "From the negotiations that took place between Your Honor and the Foreign Ministry it appears that Your Honor has not perceived well Pakistan's policy on the tribes living on this side of the Durand-Line,



together with situation of the provinces in Pakistan. I take pride to inform Your Honor about the situation. The Northwest Frontier tribes provided assistance on a large scale for the creation of Pakistan, and they expressed their resolute determination to join Pakistan when this Islamic state was established.

“The Great Leader (Mohammad Ali Jinah) submitted to the independence of the tribes and assured them that the government of Pakistan would continue to observe all the treaties, contracts, and salaries until the tribal representatives join the government of Pakistan and sign new treaties with the Northwest Frontier. Regarding the legal status of the province, it should be said that after the end of the referendum in the Northwest Frontier, the Great Leader in a special statement described and explained the situation of this province.”

He stated: “As far as this subject concerns the Pathans (Pashtuns) of the frontier province, I have no doubt that they will enjoy complete freedom in Pakistan for the progress of their social, political, and spiritual institutions, and they will have the same autonomous government, which other Pakistani provinces have. Therefore, Pakistan will have a unified policy on all of its provinces. With regard to the future, as Your Majesty are aware, a constitutional council has been established in Pakistan, which includes representatives of all parts of the country. This council will legislate and enact the Constitution of the central government and the provincial governments. Each province is free to propose to the council any subject it deems necessary for its own constitution. In the meantime, it is my pleasure to enclose two copies of the statements of the Great Leader for the information of Your Honor.

I take this opportunity to present to you my great respect.

Zafarollah, Pakistan’s Foreign Minister.”

Jinah’s statements were published in Dawn on July 31, 1947 and in August. Zafarollah’s letter contained details of the same statements.

At any rate, after more than two months, Najibollah returned to Kabul and presented to the people of Afghanistan, Pashtunistan and Balochistan the following results of his political activities:

“I can briefly say that my talks with the government of Pakistan resulted in the following points:

1-The government of Pakistan recognizes the independence of the free tribes (but the frontier was already independent.) Pakistan’s relations with that government (the independent frontier area had no government) are based on the agreement, and Pakistan will help the tribes on their path toward material and spiritual progress and prosperity.

2- Pakistan recognizes the autonomy of the Northwest Frontier province. The Frontier government is democratic and its people will be able to fully expand their political, social, and spiritual institutions (that is, within Pakistan’s federal set-up, as in the past)

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Note: The above two points were mentioned in Sir Zafarollah Khan's letter of January 1<sup>st</sup> and submitted to me.

3- According to the oral suggestions of the Great Leader, the prime minister, the foreign minister, and some other Cabinet ministers, the government of Pakistan will not reject any name the representatives of the tribes in Pakistan's Organizational Assembly choose that can represent the ethnicity of people of the Northwest Frontier Province. However, the central government of Pakistan cannot legally commit itself to this matter with a written pledge before a decision by the Organizational Assembly of Pakistan.

4- The government of Pakistan agrees to the unity of all of the Afghans on the other side of the Duran-Line (including the old free frontiers) and the decision on this matter rests with the Organizational Assembly and the people.

5- No pressure has been exerted on the frontier tribes. If they wish to join the future autonomous organization of Afghans (within the federal framework), their wish will be welcomed by the government of Pakistan. Oral assurances have been given with regard to the last two points." (*The Book of Statements*, P.137-139) (The parenthetical information belongs to the author).

This was the negative political masterpiece of the special royal envoy, the extraordinary representative of the government of Prime Minister Shah Mahmud. The government received this tragic defeat when the people of Afghanistan, Pashtunistan, and Baluchistan had reached a boiling point for restoring their national rights and their lost territories. The Jalalabad Grand Jirga (council) in March 1949 demonstrated the will of the Afghan people, with the Afghan frontier tribesmen, in support of the liberation of the Afghans living between the Durand-Line and the Sind River. In addition, the Seventh National Assembly of Afghanistan in June 1949 announced the annulment of the Durand-Line. In the same year, a donation office was opened in Kabul to assist the Pashtunistan people in their campaign for freedom. In different cities in the country, several meetings were held for the same purpose, in which they passed decisions for a campaign preparation against Pakistan toward the liberation of all Afghans between the Durand-Line and the Sind River.

But what was the situation in the occupied Pashtunistan and Baluchistan? After Britain issued on June 3, 1947 its declaration for evacuating India, the Banu Grand Jirga (council) was held on June 21 in the occupied Pashtunistan. All representatives of the free and occupied parts of Pashtunistan, Baluchistan, and major parties-such as Khodaye Khedmatgaran (God's Servants), the Frontier Jamiat ul-Ulama, and Zalmay Pashtun (Pashtun Youth)-took part in the council, while the jirgas passed this resolution: "Pashtuns do not want (to join) either India or Pakistan; they want to establish a free Pashtun government on the basis of an Islamic republic." Immediately Pakistan resorted to a faked referendum-begging votes with the Quran-to conceal the decision of the Grand National Council.

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In the meantime, bloodshed continued between Muslims and Hindus in Calcutta, Behar, Lahore, Ameritser, and Jalander. More than one hundred thousand Muslims and Hindus were killed in August and September in 1947, and the newly established Pakistan was in an unstable and convulsive state. At this time, Abdol Ghafar Khan, who was famous in Pashtunistan, following the example of Gandhi, asked the Zalmay Pashtun volunteers-who had drawn their swords-to refrain from using violence, while 25,000 of them were battle ready.

The same thing happened in Afghanistan. When in 1947 the frontier tribal council declared its independence and sent its delegates to Kabul to seek support for the armed resistance against Pakistan, "the government of His Majesty (according to Najibollah's book, p. 31)-which was continuing its talks (with Pakistan)-tried to dissuade them from taking armed action (against Pakestan), and it made them wait for the results of the friendly and peaceful talks."

These issues and approaches gave a great deal of opportunity to Pakistan to become strong. In the following year, Pakistan arrested Abdol Ghafar Khan and a year later bombarded Pashtunistan villages, as well as the Mughulgai village of Paktia in Afghanistan. A year before, it had shelled the Chahar Sadda Grand Jirga, wounding several thousand Afghans who had taken part in it, including women and children. It imprisoned several thousand others.

But what did the Afghan government do? The government in a jirga of Free Pashtunistan, held in Kabul in 1949, only decided to celebrate the ninth of the month of Sonbollah (August 31) as the Pashtunistan Day every year, while the jirga had decided that support for the liberation of Pashtunistan be provided. Of course, the government was not willing to use the force of millions of people in Afghanistan and Pashtunistan in regaining their occupied lands.

However, Pakistan, which had driven Afghanistan off the ground in talks, escalated the border clashes that had continued between the two countries since 1947, intending to put the Shah Mahmud government on a defensive position. In 1949, Pakistan launched a military raid against the Pashtunistan freedom fighters, bombarding their villages. Subsequently, the Pakistani air force entered Afghanistan and bombarded part of the Paktia province. In 1950, Pakistan put under its tight control the main Afghan transit route. In the same year, Britain recognized Pakistan as its replacement in the Afghan-populated areas beyond the Durand-Line. US president's envoy, Philip Jasup, also arrived in Kabul for mediation between and Pakistan. Of course, at this time both Britain and the United States not only tended to make Afghanistan abandon its right and claim for Pashtunistan, but they also wanted to include Afghanistan, like Pakistan, in a military pact, which was not acceptable to any Afghan government.

The government, having been defeated in the cause of Pashtunistan, resorted to a type of futile and expensive exhibitionism. For example, every year it celebrated the Pashtunistan Day, hoisted its flag, and named a square in Kabul city after

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Pashtunistan. It also established a department of tribal affairs in Kabul, with branches in some provinces, which became free lodges, receiving a huge budget, which included a portion of the people's taxes.

The purpose of this inactive department was to addict Pashtun arrivals to free entertainment and a type of political trade, with some of them receiving stipends and shelter without doing anything. However, the government put under surveillance the true leaders of Pashtunistan in Kabul, and Pakistan imposed on them the same condition on the other side of the border.

Henceforth, the campaign for the liberation of Pashtunistan was restricted to publishing articles and statements, lectures and poetry reading in tea parties and on radios. The government was afraid of forming an interim Pashtunistan government and of recognizing it in Afghanistan; it also avoided installing a radio station on the free frontier area. This approach by the government disappointed the Afghans and the Pashtunistan people. In contrast, it provided a favorable opportunity for the government of Pakistan to strengthen its sovereignty and expand its influence in the area.

#### **4- Escalation of Political Campaigns (Establishment of Parties and Parliamentary Campaigns)**

Political campaigns against tyranny and regression began against the Nadir Shah regime immediately after its establishment. Popular armed uprisings began in the north and east of the country. Dissidents assassinated Nadir Shah, his brother, and British Embassy staff members. The regime ruthlessly crushed the uprisings. The Hashem Khan government turned Afghanistan into a prison and a slaughterhouse, keeping it silent and stifled in dismal darkness for 13 years. However, within this period a new intellectual class was emerging, which was painfully witnessing the material and spiritual destruction of the country by the regime.

On the other hand, within this period the concentration of monopolized trade capital had reached a point that the growth of capital investment was tangible in agriculture and industry. The number of farm and industrial workers increased, and prosperous farmers were moving toward creating a rural middle class in towns and villages. However, the masses of workers did not have legal protection, nor did they have a labor union. (Even the contents of the flawed draft of the 1946 law was not enforced.) The smaller farmers were heading toward bankruptcy in rural areas. The relative growth of capitalism in Afghanistan's feudal society was paving the ground for a conflict of interests of big merchants and major capitalists with the middle and small classes. Social conflicts were intensifying.

The middle class and the opposition intelligentsia resented the big monopolizing trade companies and landowners, both of which were in control of the country's power and policy. The opposition wanted to harness the wild horse of the big companies and landowners so that it may not trample the interests of the majority. The first voice of protest against the monopoly and privilege of the big capitalists was an article by this writer titled "Our Economy," which was published in *Islah* on October 9, 1946. A council of the Cabinet interrogated and threatened me for writing the article. The government ousted M. Qadir Taraki, from his editorial post of *Islah* and maligned him for many years.

Obviously, a number of opposition intellectuals, who focused their campaign on the economic scene, reflected much of what the public politically wanted, particularly at a time when the farm workers and farmers had no party or union. The intellectual opposition had to play the leading role in political and economic campaigns, which also complied with the wishes of major nationalist merchants and capitalists. For this reason, once again political movements and circles organized in the country.

The government, having perceived the new domestic social conditions, with the existing international situation, knew that emergence of political parties was inevitable. Therefore, for its own interests, the government decided to take the

initiative. At the same time, it tried to prevent the establishment of independent parties not connected to the ruling family. Through its agents, the government also tried to bring under its control the leaders of all political activities, right, left, and "revolutionary" parties. Admittedly, the ruling family, despite its meager knowledge, had deep experience in colonial-style ruling by divide-and-rule formula and knew quite well how to slow and deviate the course of change and development in society and how to perpetuate its future dominance in Afghanistan. However, the government, facing a serious resistance by the people, largely failed in its scheme.

Before enacting democratic laws and declaring democracy in the country, the government started a trial period and announced free parliamentary and municipal elections. With regard to the opposition political freedom, Shah Mahmud adopted a wait-and-see policy to see the kind of stand the opposition would take after his declaration of democracy-to see whether the opposition would consider the new political freedom a "gift and goodwill" on the part of the ruling family-and to see whether the opposition, after undergoing all that pain and torture in the past, would accept government leadership and place the ruling family's interests above the national interests. Of course, in the first case, the government would have benefited from political movements and perpetuated itself. In the second case, it would have suppressed or corrupted them.

With this trial plan, the government feared the formation of a single or unified opposition front. Therefore, it tried hard to keep the intellectual circles fragmented. It also infiltrated the newly established political parties in various ways in order to undermine or mislead them if necessary. In addition, it established its own party called the National Democratic Party, so that it might act as a powerful challenge to the other parties on the political scene.

However, after the parliamentary election, the establishment of parties, and publication of party papers, what the government had expected did not materialize because they all formed a united front against the government despite their political and organizational diversity. They also wanted to establish a democratic system, expand freedom and equality for all, and campaign against the political and economic monopoly of the ruling classes. For this reason, the government suppressed all of the political movements and resumed its old policy of suppression. Until then, however, the parties and their publications had done enough to affect the public mind. To completely efface the effects, the government continued its suppression for ten years, abolishing parliamentary and municipal elections, banning political parties and their publications -thus eliminating any opportunity for the patriotic opposition to re-emerge on the political scene.

## **Weesh Zalmiyan Party**

In 1947, the Weesh Zalmiyan was openly established, with the following being its founding leaders and members in Kabul, Kandahar, and Nangarhar: Abdol Raof Benawa, Gol Pacha Olfat, Faiz M. Angar, Nur M. Taraki, Gholam Hosayn Safi (the last two persons belonged to the Abdol Majid Zaboli group), M. Rasul Pashtun, Abdol Shakur Reshad, Abdol Hadi Tukhi, M. Anwar Achakzai, Qazi Bahram, Gholam Jailani, Qazi Abdol Samad, Fatah M. Khatgar, M. Qazi Khil, M. Ebrahim Khakhuzi, M. Naser Lalpuri, Sufi Wali Mohammad, Aqa M. Karzai, M. Musa Shafiq, Gholam Khan Popal, M. Taher Safi, Qiyamaddin Khadem, Arsalan Salimi, Nik M. Paktani, Sadiqollah Rashtin, Abdol Aziz, Abdol Khaleq Wasai, Mohammad Ali, Nur Ahmad Shaker, M. Rasul Muslim, M. Hosayn Ridi, Abdol Razaq Farahi, M. Nur Alam, Maulawi Obeidollah Safi, Gol Shah Safi, Zahorollah Hamdard, M. Sharif Qazi, Abdol Maran Dardmand, Aqaye Maliya, Abdol Samad Wisa, M. Ali Basarki, and a few others.

At the beginning, Binawa was the party secretary and later Farahi succeeded him. The members provided the party expenses. The *Angar* newspaper, published by Faiz M. Anger, was the first party publication. It started its publication in March 1951, but the government banned it in April. *Angar* was replaced by *Wolos*, which was published by Gol Pacha Olfat from 1951 to 1953. In addition, in 1947 Abdol Rauf Binawa published a book titled *Weesh Zalmiyan*, which consisted of articles by a number of party and non-party individuals. The book contained articles from both nationalist intellectuals and government's representatives-such as Abdol Majid Zaboli, the minister of economy.

## **The Charter of Weesh Zalmiyan**

(1) Enlightenment of minds and expansion of education. (2) Campaign against tyranny and treason. (3) Correction of bad habits and superstitions. (4) Support for (human) rights and truth. (5) Creation of national unity.

The Charter also included a supplement, which described the qualities of the party member in the following terms: (1) one who believes in goodness and reform. (2) One who is patient and unemotional? (3) One who is not jealous and spiteful because of his personal interests. (4) One who does not lie. (5) One who does not flatter and cajole; neither does he expect these from others. (6) One who does not surrender to evil and war. (7) One who is more inclined toward construction than destruction. (8) One who loves the faith, the nation, the homeland, and the government. (9) One who puts public interests above his personal interests. (10) One who does not have fear on the path of truth. (11) One who follows truth and what is right. (12) If he is an official, he does not cheat and oppress. (13) One who works hard for the national unity.

With this program, the Weesh Zalmiyan party began its political activities. Its members increased within a few years. It had a friendly attitude toward other political parties and circles. Therefore, it enjoyed an increasing fame and credibility. A limited number of its members wanted to restrict the party to one language and region. For example, Sadiqollah Reshtin wanted to change the name of the party to "Weesh Pashtun" – a name that he also used in an article of *Weesh Zalmiyan* book about the party. In 1951, the Kandahar faction of the party split and called itself *Ekhwat* (Brotherhood) with a new program. In the fall of the same year, the *Ekhwat* Party formed its financial, publication, and publicity committees. However, the main party in Kabul did not accept the split and took a path of reconciliation.

At any rate, the Weesh Zalmiyan sent two representatives – Gol Pacha Olfat from Nangarhar and Nur Mohammad from Kandahar – to the Seventh National Assembly, in which they stood against the government front. Along with other nationalist parties and independent personalities, they continued their parliamentary campaigns. Weesh Zalmiyan in Kandahar also took part in parliamentary campaigns by nominating one of its members named Abdol Shakur Reshad for the Eighth National Assembly. The government, however, imposed another person by the name of Abdol Ghafur Kharuti. For the same reason, early in 1952, the government imprisoned a number of the leaders of the Kandahar Weesh Zalmiyan, including M. Anwar Achakzai, Abdol Hadi Tukhi, Gholam Jailani Alakuzai, Qazi Behram, Qazi Abdol Samad, M. Yusof Mojadaddi, Faiz M. Angar, M. Alam Achakzai, Haji M. Hutaki, M. Rasul Pashtun (banished to Baghlan), and M. Aziz Tukhi. One of them, Khodai Dost, died after eight years of imprisonment in Kabul, while Abdol Hadi Tukhi, Qazi Bahram, and Aziz Tukhi remained in prison for almost 12 years. M. Anwar Achakzai was released after his fifth year; Qazi Bahram, Abdol Samad, M. Yusof Mojadaddi, and Gholam Jailani Alakuzai were released during the fourth year. M. Ebrahim Khwakhuzhi was imprisoned for four months in 1950. The government of Prime Minister Sardar Mohammad Daud banned the Weesh Zalmiyan Party in 1953, with only a few small circles of friends surviving.

### **The National Democratic Party (NDP)**

When the government witnessed the new political trends of the opposition in the Parliament, political circles, and the Student Union, it took measures to weaken them and prevent their growth by forming its own party in 1950.

With a written permission from the king, Defense Minister Sardar M. Daud (cousin of the king)-with Economy Minister Abdol Majid Zaboli (a major entrepreneur), Minister of Education Sardar Faiz M. Zakriya (symbol of aristocracy), and Deputy Prime Minister Ali M. Badakhshani (symbol of conservatism)-established the so-called "National Democratic Party." Powerful and



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wealthy members of the party consisted of several affluent members of the Mohammadzai clan, army generals, big merchants and landowners, some ministers, and finally a number of conservative intellectuals. The following is the NDP 11-article charter:

- (1) Members of the party must be Muslims and subjects of Afghanistan.
- (2) Members of the party must be absolutely loyal and committed to the Constitutional Monarchy of Afghanistan
- (3) Members of the party must relate their survival to the survival of the independence and sovereignty of Afghanistan without any condition and limit and restrict to it all levels of the welfare of the country and the people.
- (4) They must have resolute faith in the principles of democracy (national sovereignty) according to the teachings of Islam and in the results received from those principles by the advanced nations of the world.
- (5) Members of the party must have equally complete respect for the Constitution and all laws of the country regardless of their race, family, wealth, and personal influence.
- (6) Members of the party must have high moral ground.
- (7) Members of the party must have resolute faith, and must follow it actively, in preferring national interests to personal interests.
- (8) Members of the party must consider justice as the basis of social stability and national welfare and make it their national and religious duties to maintain it.
- (9) Members of the party must consider national unity as the material and spiritual cornerstone of the Afghan nation and make every effort to eliminate tribal disunity.
- (10) Members of the party must believe that corruption and mismanagement in state and public institutions cause national damage and they should prevent any kind of anarchy by applying the principles of the law.
- (11) State and public works must be entrusted to qualified persons regardless of race, position, personal influence, and misuse of national and state money must be avoided.

Each member of the party was required to take an oath of loyalty in the name of God or Quran to the party charter, observe all of its articles, and preserve its secrets.

The party headquarters was a building in the Shar-e Nau section of Kabul. The building, called the National Club, belonged to Sardar Gholam Faruq Osman, a former minister of the interior. The party's luxury expenses came from the treasury of Abdol Majid Zaboli. Its secretary was Dr. Abdol Qayum Laghmani, who later became minister and deputy prime minister. This royal party, despite all the pomp and the power it exercised in alluring and coercing the people, did not render any service to the Afghan society. It was not capable of even publishing a paper. The public did not welcome it and the intellectuals boycotted it. According to its charter,

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a party member could not voice a criticism of the government outside the party. A number of the Seventh National Assembly representatives, molded by the party, never opened their mouths for criticism inside the Parliament, where they remained as spectators or sometimes defenders of the government.

Since the NDP had failed in all of its practical areas, it disintegrated like a mud brick sinking in water during the government of M. Daud in 1953. Having learned a lesson from the failure of the party, the new government decided later that the ruling family should not directly form a party but allow other persons-who were apparently to the left but actually serving the government-act on its behalf. This was a dangerous decision.

### **Watan Party (Homeland Party)**

The Watan Party (WP) was established on January 6, 1951 in Kabul. In the absence of party law in the country, the request for the establishment of the party and its charter was submitted to the king (the prime minister was abroad). The following were the WP founders: Mir Gholam M. Ghobar, Serwer Juya, Mir M. Sadiq Ferhang, Fatah M. Mirzad, Nur ul-Haq Hirmand, Berat Ali Taj, and Abdol Hay Aziz.

### **The Charter**

- (1) Safeguarding the territorial integrity of Afghanistan and its independence
- (2) Promoting principles of democracy in all social segments of the country
- (3) Strengthening national unity in Afghanistan
- (4) Making efforts in advancing public education, public health, and public economy
- (5) Maintaining social justice, human rights, and public interests
- (6) Eliminating social corruption
- (7) Respect for and commitment to world peace

### **Program and Organization**

To enforce the charter, the WP Central Council approves the following program and requires all of the party organs and members to observe and apply it:

- (1) Campaign against any move, measure, propaganda, or indoctrination aimed at fragmenting the land or damaging the independence of Afghanistan
- (2) Expanding the principles of democracy in all social segments of the country, particularly equality for all individuals regardless of race, religion, and language. Freedom of expression, rallying, employment, shelter, and travel according to

## **AFGHANISTAN IN THE COURSE OF HISTORY**

democratic principles. Separation of the three branches of government and defining their duties and the limits of their powers.

(3) Campaign against any move, measure, propaganda, and indoctrination aimed at weakening Afghanistan's national unity and escalating racial, ethnic, religious, and provincial differences and divisions.

(4) Adopting a general compulsory education plan for men and women in cities and villages, as well as for nomads and tribesmen. Adopting a public health plan, a public economic plan to strengthen agriculture, establish national industry, to control and sponsor economic activities for the public benefit. Providing employment for all and raising the economic standard of the people.

(5) Safeguarding life, property, and human rights of all the people against any aggression and violation, and restricting punishment to court verdicts. Securing the rights and interests of all farmers, workers, employees, women, children, the disabled by enacting laws and creating assistance and supportive institutions

(6) Eliminating social evils, superstitions, and harmful customs, such as bribery, flattery, wastefulness, lechery, and so on. Encouraging the people to live a simple and trouble-free life.

(7) Maintaining friendly relations with all nations based on respecting mutual rights and protecting the honor of Afghanistan in world community.

"The party will try to draw the public attention to this program by publicity, presenting practical examples, performing dedicated social services, and seeking legislation of proper and useful laws for the implementation of the program."

### **Organizational Articles**

(1) The party's center is in Kabul

(2) A party member must be an Afghan citizen and legally mature in age. One who wants to join the party must submit to the Acting Committee of the party in his province a written request with recommendations from two party members. The committee has the authority to accept or reject the request. The committee secretary will issue a membership sheet for the new member and will relay the information to the Central Office.

(3) The party members are required to contribute one afghani per month to the party fund.

(4) The party members of each province, which form the Provincial Council, hold a meeting once a year, with the date and place determined by the Acting Committee.

(5) The Provincial Council can hold urgent meetings upon the request of the Provincial Acting Committee or the Central Acting Committee or upon the request of more than half of provincial members.

(6) A council meeting will be official only when more than half of the council members take part in it.

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- (7) The Provincial Council elects from its own members the Acting Committee, which ranges from five to ten members.
- (8) The Provincial Council adopts necessary measures to implement the party charter and program in the province. It can also supervise the party fund.
- (9) The Provincial Council elects its representatives for the Central Council. The number of the representatives it sends to the Central Council should be in proportion to the members of the Provincial Council.
- (10) With the approval of the Central Acting Committee, the Provincial Council appoints its candidates for parliamentary and municipal elections
- (11) The Provincial Acting Committee is bound to implement the party charter and program, as well as the decisions of the central and provincial committees and councils. The Provincial Acting Committee is responsible before the Central Acting Committee and the Provincial Council.
- (12) The Provincial Acting Committee will appoint a president, a secretary, and a financial official. It can also put some of the members in charge of publicity, publications, and other executive functions.
- (Note 1: The numbers of provincial committees will be according to the numbers of provinces.)
- (Note 2: Although the headquarters of the party is in Kabul, the Kabul province, like other provinces, has its own provincial council and acting committee.)

### **Central Council**

- (13) The party Central Council, which consists of provincial representatives, will hold its annual convention sometime in the fall. The Central Acting Committee sets the time and place.
- (14) Upon the request of the Central Acting Committee or more than half of the members of the Provincial Acting Committees, the Central Council can hold urgent meetings.
- (15) The Central Council is authorized to form from its members the Central Acting Committee for one year, which should be from 10 to 15 persons.
- (16) The Central Council is bound to plan the party program according to the charter from time to time and submit it for implementation to the Central Acting Committee.
- (17) The Central Acting Committee is bound to implement the articles of the charter, the party program, and the decisions of the Central Council throughout the country.
- (18) The Central Acting Committee appoints from among its members a president, a secretary, and an accountant. It can also appoint from its members or other party members publicity, publication, and executive personnel. It also prepares the party budget and implements it after the approval of the Central Council.

(19) If a party member neglects to accept or implement orders of the party authorities, misuse his position, or embark on social and personal acts that go against the party principles and reputation, he will face disciplinary punishments.

(20) The disciplinary punishments include warning, membership suspension, and membership revocation.

(21) At first, the Provincial Acting Committee will question the suspect and the results of the interrogation will be sent to the Provincial Council, which is authorized to either acquit him or chastise him. A warning by the Provincial Council to the suspect is irreversible; however, he can appeal to the Central Acting Committee if the punishment is more serious.

The WP in its general and central council sessions (Thaur, Asad, and Qaws 1951) ratified the following:

“Members of the Party Acting Committee in their personal and official affairs will follow the decisions of the Acting Committee. Social thoughts and deeds of the members will come under the scrutiny and attention of the party. Party members will voluntarily accept the party discipline. Membership admission will be based on quality, not quantity. The Acting Committee will hold weekly sessions, so that it can study proposals by the party secretary and other party members.”

The party's Central Council made this decision regarding the party's foreign policy: “With regard to the two Eastern and Western camps, the WP follows a neutral and peaceful policy. At the same time, it wants Afghanistan, Pashtunistan, and all other colonized countries to regain their rights. In other words, the party's international political stand is not about the clashes between the East and the West; it is about the clashes between the Eastern nations and colonialism. For this reason, concerning the issues of Pashtunistan, Iran's oil, Suez Canal, Egypt, etc, the party's publication (*Jarida-e Watan*) has supported the rights of its own people and of the peoples of Iran, Egypt, Sudan, Morocco, Indochina, etc. Therefore, the policy of the WP's publication is in agreement with the party's constitution.”

**The Central Council Also Registered that:**

“In the area of internal affairs, the party believes that the new democratic movements of Afghanistan are based on the people's wishes. Thus, these movements do not merely rely on the wishes of an intellectual group, which is only the translator of the people's wishes for justice. Therefore, the WP believes that its first duty is to take part in this jihad and national campaign, and it will continue it. The WP also feels obligated to protect Afghanistan's national unity and territorial integrity, under a democratic regime, to remove obstacles imposed on its culture and languages, to eliminate discriminations and superstitions, so that all Afghan ethnic groups may attain equality and democratic freedoms, with the right to develop their language and culture. Otherwise Afghanistan, as a unified and historical entity, may face the danger of disintegration.”

At this critical time, Reshtiya, a high-ranking official of the ruling family, met with Ferhang in the office of Kabul Governor Shah Alami several times to entrap him with promises and threats. Ferhang, not resisting all this pressure and deception, finally capitulated, and later tried to justify the point that requesting the government to release him from political imprisonment was the right step. In this way, Ferhang also influenced one or two other imprisoned WP members to follow suit. However, this writer and the majority of the WP imprisoned members, including Serwer Juya and Fateh M. Mirzad, refused to capitulate to the regime. They said that such a step would slip them into the hand of the ruling family, from which there would not be a release. The majority of the WP imprisoned members decided that they would never surrender to the government and that they would preserve the pride and dignity of the people for whom they were fighting.

After his release from prison and meeting with Prime Minister Daud, Ferhang took a distance from many members of the party. Several years later, he became deputy minister and ambassador to a sensitive European capital (Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia, which was the main center of political and intelligence competition of the Eastern and Western powers).

During the nomination of Ferhang for the National Assembly, the ruling family provided some facility through Reshtiya, the minister of finance, for the election of Ferhang and his sister, Ruqia Abubakr. In addition, through the marriage relationship of his two sons-the marriage of Seyyid Faruq Ferhang with a daughter of the Indian Allah Nawaz and the marriage of Seyyid Amin Ferhang with the step-sister of the queen of Afghanistan, the daughter of Ahmad Shah Khan, the cousin of king Nadir and his court minister-Ferhang established a closer relationship with the royal family. In this way, Reshtiya, who was an old servant of the ruling family, attained his goal by wrapping Ferhang in the political blanket of the ruling family. Ferhang caused a drastic blow to the party from inside.

Prime Minister M. Daud in 1956 asked a number of WP members released from prison, including Ferhang, to cooperate with his government. Those who accepted his deceptive call slowly sank into the politics of the ruling family with gradual promotions in important government posts inside and outside the country.

Those who rejected the prime minister's call and did not betray the people came under the tyrannical pressure of the ruling family, which also tried to isolate them. After my release from prison, Prime Minister Daud also summoned me at his office and asked me to cooperate with his government. I turned down the request and said, "A nation for its progress, preservation of its independence and sovereignty, needs democracy and independent national leadership, which should not be restricted or dependent on the will of one or two individuals. I am the owner of the Watan Newspaper, which the former government banned, and the founder and secretary of the Watan Party, which was also banned by that government. Now you are saying that Afghanistan is moving toward progress. If so, then the

remained in prison from 1952 to 1953. Five others-Mir. Gholam M. Ghobar, Mir M. Sadiq Ferhang, Abdol Halim Atefi, Ali Ahmad Naimi, and Ali M. Kharush-were not released until 1956. Three others-Fateh M. Mirzad, Berat Ali Taj, and Serwer Juya (he died in prison after nine years)-remained in confinement for ten years. Later, four other WP members-Haji Abdol Khaleq, Mir Ali Ahmad Shamel, M. Asef Ahang, and Nader Shah Haruni-were in prison from 1957 to 1962.

Following the imprisonment of the founding members and members of the Central Acting Committee, these four members, with M. Aslam Akhgar, Shir M. Assiaban, and Gholam Haidar Panjsheri, had established the temporary WP Acting Committee in Kabul. Another member of the party, M. Taher Ghaznawi, was released during his first year in prison. Later, Sardar M. Daud officially ordered the dissolution of the party (1956).

The ruling family did not stop at arresting the WP members; it also tried to destroy the party by infiltrating them in prison. On one hand, the government, through Abdol Hakim Shah Alami, the Kabul governor, tried to create division within the imprisoned party members by using coercion and threat. On the other hand, the ruling family through Seyyid Qassem Reshtiya, embarked on a perilous scheme. Seyyid Qassem Reshtiya (a member of finance minister Mir Hashem's family and son of chief accountant of Kabul, Seyyid Habib)-had tried since his youth to be at the service of the royal family. In addition, through a special closeness with Mirza M. Shah, the intelligence chief, Reshtiya attracted the attention of the ruling family so much that he became minister in several cabinets after quickly passing through different ambassadorial and ministerial posts. The ruling family had so much trust in him that in sensitive periods during his posts as president of the Press Department and then minister of the Press Ministry he was entrusted with monitoring, censoring, and controlling the works of true Afghan intellectuals.

During the reign of the ruling family, the intelligence network had become the main bloodline of tyranny and absolutism in Afghanistan. The intelligence chief, who was engaged in watching Afghan opposition intellectuals and sending them to prisons, confided to and received his orders directly from the king or the prime minister. The only other person who, by the instructions of the prime minister, was privy to these wicked secrets was the secretary of the Cabinet council, who had to be a confidant of the ruling family. When serving as a Cabinet secretary, Seyyid Qassem Reshtiya also accomplished this dangerous intelligence duty for the ruling family.

Another reason why the ruling family assigned Reshtiya to harm the Watan Party was that he was brother of Mir M. Sadiq Ferhang, a WP imprisoned member, and he could infiltrate the party through his brother. At this time, Ferhang had been frightened by the terrifying conditions of the political prison, with his spiritual resistance being broken by the incessant threat and terror of the governor of Kabul, Shah Alami.

At this critical time, Reshtiya, a high-ranking official of the ruling family, met with Ferhang in the office of Kabul Governor Shah Alami several times to entrap him with promises and threats. Ferhang, not resisting all this pressure and deception, finally capitulated, and later tried to justify the point that requesting the government to release him from political imprisonment was the right step. In this way, Ferhang also influenced one or two other imprisoned WP members to follow suit. However, this writer and the majority of the WP imprisoned members, including Serwer Juya and Fateh M. Mirzad, refused to capitulate to the regime. They said that such a step would slip them into the hand of the ruling family, from which there would not be a release. The majority of the WP imprisoned members decided that they would never surrender to the government and that they would preserve the pride and dignity of the people for whom they were fighting.

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government should announce freedom of the press and parties and let me independently activate the Watan Party and its publication.”

The prime minister, like his uncle, Nadir Shah, said this in his peculiar temper, “The government does not permit non-government publications and parties. The Watan Party and its publication are both banned, and you will stay home and the government will be watching you for refusing to cooperate with it.” The ruling family enforced this despotic order against me for 20 years without the verdict of any legal court. During this period, I could not publish the paper and engage in party activity or publish any article in other publications. It was because of these despotic methods that the first volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History* was banned later by the ruling family. When the ruling family for the second time announced democracy from the top, it used force and conspiracy at Kabul election polls to prevent my election for the National Assembly. During this disgraceful period of “state democracy,” the government announced my name as an “appointed” member of a commission for drafting the new constitution, but I rejected the offer, just as I was rejecting to hold an official post or to be a member of an artificial political party.

It should be noted that the ruling family, as usual, did not require preliminary investigation or court trial of the political imprisonment of any member of the WP. The prime minister conducted all this by verbal orders. A Cabinet meeting, which raised the issue, decided that the prisoners should remain in prison until they appease the anger of “His Highness” (the prime minister).

The government’s treatment of the WP did not end here. Before the active members were arrested, for two weeks Kabul Radio broadcast religious rulings, with Arabic quotations, from a number of hired mullas, stating that they (the party demonstrators during the parliamentary election day) were a source of corruption and evil in Afghan society; therefore the shariah law requires that each one must lose by amputation the right hand and the left foot or vice versa. The notorious preacher of these rulings was Mulla Abdol Qadir Shahab, who received a promotion for his service.

The government also ordered its governors throughout the country to send presumed letters of complaints from the people or delegates to the prime minister for asking him to punish the demonstrators or hand them over to the people to punish them. Of course, a number of delegates, who did not know much about the issue background, arrived sooner from the vicinity of Kabul. The local governors were sending them to Kabul under the name of meeting with the prime minister.

A mockery began to unfold when a number of delegates from around Kabul, not knowing the plan, arrived in the capital sooner than expected. The prime minister asked them questions about the subject, but they did know what to say. At this time, a government functionary took out of his pocket a written note and read it as a letter of complaint by the delegates. A second government functionary stood up

reading a sermon accusing the intellectuals, particularly the demonstrators, of apostasy, demanding their execution and the mutilation, with the confiscation of their possessions. A third one stood up reading a chapter in praise of the virtues and charities of the ruling family. Then the prime minister read the old record of the ruling family, repeating over and over "the endless mercies of the monarchy toward the faithful subjects" and ending the ceremony by praying for the fortune and for a thousand years of life for the royal family. The following day, the official newspapers filled their columns with the news of the meeting, together with notes and comments by hired writers (See issues of *Anis* and *Islah* of the time. For example, the *Anis* issue of Thaur 14, 1331). Having imprisoned the activist WP members, the government published the following announcement in its official *Islah* and *Anis* newspapers and broadcast it from Kabul Radio:

"The Ministry of Interior in Kabul issued the following announcement:

For some time, a number of rebellious elements have carried out subversive activities to disrupt security for the benefit of the enemies. The police, having monitored the situation for some time, finally arrested the following seditious group members: Mir Gholam M. Ghobar, Abdol Rahman Mahmudi, Abdol Hay Aziz, Mir M. Sadiq Ferhang, Brat Ali Taj, Gholam Serwer Juya, Abdol Qayum Rasul, Ali M. Kharus, Fateh Mohammad, Sultan Ahmad (son of the late governor Ali Ahmad Khan), Nasrollah Yusofi, Gholam Faruq Etadmadi, Amanollah Mahmudi, Abu Bakr, Abdol Halim Atefi, Ali Ahmad Naimi, M. Rahim Mahmudi. " (Among the prisoners, four persons (Dr. Abdol Rahman Mahmudi, Dr. Nasrollah Yusofi, Amanollah Mahmudi, and M. Rahim Mahmudi) were members of the Khalq Party and the rest were all WP members.)

## **The Khalq Party**

The Khalq Party was established in Kabul in 1950. The party president, Abdol Rahman Mahmudi, a medical doctor, was a graduate of Kabul University. His sincere and sympathetic treatment of the people soon made him famous in Kabul, and his outspoken language manifested his social conscience. He appeared on the political scene for the first time in the municipal elections of Kabul in 1948. He delivered critical and inspirational speeches at public gatherings and the public in Kabul received him well. The government imprisoned him for several weeks. He was later elected for the Seventh National Assembly.

Famous members of the Khalq Party were Abdol Rahman Mahmudi (the party president), M. Naim Shayan (the party secretary), Maulawi Khal M. Khastah, Maulawi Fazl Rabi, Abdol Hamid Mobarez, Dr. Abdollah Wahedi, M. Yusof Ayena, Nur Alam Mazlumyar, Gholam Ahmad Rahmani, M. Taher Mohseni, Abdol Rahim Ghafori, M. Yunes Mahdizadeh, Dr. Nasrollah Yusofi, Seyyid Ahmad

Hashemi, M. Ebrahim, Hafizollah Abdol Rahimzai, Dr. Abdol Ahad Rashidi, Dr. Abdollah Rashidi and few others.

The party organ *Jarida-e Nadaye Khalq* (Voice of the People). Mahmudi was the owner of the publication and its editor was his son-in-law, Wali M. Attai. The publication was established in April 1951 and banned in July by the government.

**The Party Charter** (as per Nadyae Khalq, Thaur 1331):

- 1- The Khalq Party was a national party based on known democratic principles.
- 2- The teaching of Islam to the masses and reforming their deeds will be the only factor for success and progress.
- 3- The Khalq party, as a true democratic party, campaigns for maintaining the true aim of democracy-the government of the people by the people and for the people.
- 4- The Khalq Party will strive to establish a government based on democratic principles, with an honorable freely elected assembly, and it will maintain fundamental balance among the branches of power.
- 5- It will maintain social justice in law and judicial courts, and it will eliminate oppression. It will maintain a secure and peaceful social life, a basic healthy life, freedom of thought, expression, and publication, and it will provide social justice in labor and promotion of political rights.
- 6- The Khalq Party, as mentioned in Article 5, will fulfill all of its social duties, and it will reflect the basic laws of democracy and public views. Therefore, it considers its important duty to publish, add, adjust, and amend laws and maintain social justice, social and political equality.
- 7- Self-sacrifice for protecting the territorial integrity and national dignity is the first duty of the party, and it will campaign against any element threatening this sacred goal.
- 8- The Khalq Party will consider national unity as the basis of its duties; therefore, it regards all individuals, regardless of race, language, color of skin, living within the political geography of the country, as a unified body, with equal rights before the law. It regards any demand for special privilege and sectarian strife contrary to social justice and democratic principles.
- 9- The Khalq Party regards work as the only factor for prosperity. It regards unemployment as shame and demeaning; therefore, it is necessary to create job opportunities throughout the country, provide work guidance through modern education, maintain social justice in labor, in workers' rights, fight against exploitation and captivity in the work place, maintain workers' rights during the work time and unemployment time. The party does not extend promotion and position based on ethnic and personal privilege. It only accepts skill, dedication, and work talent as the basis of progress and occupation of higher positions.
- 10- The Khalq Party is not against individual interests, defense of individual rights and freedoms, but it regards as profiteering those who in the name of defending

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individual rights and freedoms threaten the welfare of other individuals and society, and it will deal with them according to democratic principles.

11- The Khalq Party considers as national traitors those who gain wealth and position by committing illegal acts, using these as a means of suppressing the people, and intentionally acting against public interests. It considers its primary duty to maintain social justice and restore the rights of those concerned in these cases.

12- The Khalq Party has the obligation to be faithful to democratic principles and the Islamic constitutional monarchy. Therefore, it is obligated to maintain a true balance of power among the three branches of the government, together with the legislation and clarification of limits of rights in society, the definition of the duties of the state and the nation.

13- Improving social affairs and maintaining social justice in taxes, tariffs, and social services; maintaining social justice in enforcing laws; disregarding discriminatory privileges in social affairs, taxes, and social public duties, and reforming the current affairs-these are the primary responsibilities of the party.

14- Freedom in social activities is the party's foundation and primary duty. Therefore, freedom of trade and profession, industry, and choice of career is the foundation of democracy. Campaign against personal monopoly that threatens the public interests is also a primary duty of the party.

15- Preserving good relations with the neighbors as long as they do not violate national rights, freedom, and national honor; observing general international laws; maintaining and observing fundamentals of human rights as long as they do not go against the laws of Islam; cooperation for peace and the public good-these are also the duties of the Khalq Party.

16- Maintaining freedom and human rights-the right to life, shelter, freedom of expression, publications, and in social activities-the party considers these to be intrinsic human rights. Therefore, any aggression against them is tyranny, and the party will campaign against any tyrannical thought and action.

17- The party organization, duties of its central and provincial branches, publication and amendment of the constitution, the fundamental state organizations, the election law, the employment law, the labor law, and the enforcement of these laws-these are also the fundamental duties of the Khalq Party, which must be performed with democratic principles.

18- Membership to the party requires adherence to party morality-which means duty commitment, maturity, and moral strength in teaching and publishing Islamic, party, and democratic principles-and securing public rights without any discrimination.

19- The law of the internal duties, membership requirement, warning, reprimand, and even expulsion from the party, election of the party president and cadres, and its organization-all of these will be handled in consultation with the party general session and every member must follow its principles.

20- Every individual with Afghan citizenship can enter the party without any discrimination provided he has nothing in his background against the party principles.

21- Any individual becoming a member should not be less than 18.

22- Every party member is required to contribute a fee of 10 afghanis per month. The money is used to strengthen and promote the party affairs. Purchase of a share from the Khalq stocks is also mandatory. (Those who cannot afford to pay the required fee will be exempted)

23- Amendment of the articles of the party charter requires a majority vote of the party general session. However, any article against the public freedom and rights, the national unity, the Islamic faith, or threat against the Afghan political boundary will not be acceptable.

24- Individuals joining the party will have to take this oath:

“I take this oath in the name of God and on my honor to abide by all of the charter articles of the Khalq Party to commit myself to promoting the party’s interests and preserving its secrets even after I leave it.”

The Khalq Party was also a target of the government’s crackdown. The government arrested a number of its leading members. Dr. Mahmudi was jailed (1952) and two other members of the party-Abdol Hamid Mobarez and M. Yusof Ayena-were detained three days before the demonstration. Political prisoners of the Khalq Party were: Dr. Abdol Rahman Mahmudi, M. Naim Shayan, Nur Alam Mazlumyar, M. Yunes Mahdizadeh with his brother M. Soleyman, Dr. Nasrollah Yusofi, Dr. M. Rahim, M. Azim, Amanollah (the last three persons were brothers of Mahmudi). Mobarez and Ayena were released after three months, while Rahim Mahmudi, Azim Mahmudi, and Nasrollah Yusofi were released after one year. Mazlumyar was banished to Takharestan, where he remained for more than 10 years. Naim Shayan, Mahdizadeh, with his brother Soleyman, and Amanollah Mahmudi remained in prison for four years. Dr. Abdol Rahman Mahmudi remained in prison for nine years and two months after release died by various diseases. Thus disappeared the Khalq Party, like the other parties.

### **The Secret Unity Party**

Khaja M. Naim Kabuli, the security commander of Balkh province during the Shah Mahmud government, became acquainted with Seyyid Ismail Balkhi, a scholar and a religious leader. Being at first an official of the intelligence service, Khaja was aware of the crimes the intelligence service was committing (during the Hashem Khan regime). Later he became more aware of these crimes when he was appointed security commander of Kabul. He was a trusted official and personally involved in the operation. Later, however, his conscience began to annoy him deeply and he

changed after meeting with Seyyid Ismail. As a patriotic cleric, with a profound knowledge of his time, of the corruption in the government and the deplorable condition of the Afghan people, Seyyid Ismail had an awakening effect on Khaja, whose acquaintance soon turned into a political friendship, which then resulted in the creation of a secret party core called Itehad (Unity). They believed no reform in Afghanistan was possible without ending the ruling family dominance. Therefore, they decided to form a secret circle in the country to overthrow the monarchy by assassinations and coups and then prepare the ground for the establishment of a republic. To attain their goal, members of the secret circle adopted a special strategy.

At first, without writing a program or a constitution or forming an organization, they relied on talks or sporadic meetings, so that no party document would fall into the hand of the government in case of a crackdown. They also decided to include in their friendship circle any individual disgruntled with the government. In this way, they also managed to rally a number of individuals in Balkh, Herat, Ghor, Kabul, and other provinces, where they were anticipating a major event.

In Kabul, Seyyid and Khaja increased their activities and soon formed a central circle that included the following persons: Mir Ismail, a representative of the Sorkh-e Parsa district in the Seventh National Assembly; Ebrahim Shahrestani known as the Bull-Rider; Qorban Nazar Turkmani, a military officer; Abdol Ghayath Kuhestani, a warehouse director of Kabul Military School; Gholam Haidar Bayat, a military officer; M. Hosayn Bayat, a military officer; M. Safar Bayat; Mirza Abdol Latif Kabuli; Mirza M. Aslam, director of public works, and perhaps a few others.

Finally, the central circle decided to assassinate Prime Minister Shah Mahmud and his guards on Nowroz (new year's day) in 1950 during the traditional plowing festival on the foothill of Ali Abad Mountain. According to the plan, the lower-ranking officers of the party, with Kuhdamani and Kuhestani men, were supposed to attack from all around. Then they would storm the Dehmazang Prison and, with the support of more than a thousand prisoners, they would march toward the Arg. Members of the circle calculated that the monarchy would then collapse by a popular uprising of thousands of people joining the insurgency. Immediately after the fall of the monarchy, they would declare Afghanistan a republic. The plan ended here, leaving for the future the administration and reconstruction of the country.

However, before the appointed day, recommended by a member of the central circle (Mirza Aslam), a new member named Goljan Werdaki joined the central circle. As a rule, putting his hands on the Quran, he took the oath of loyalty and pledged he would supply the party with a quantity of arms. The new member, who had killed eight of his personal enemies, was a henchman of the famous Mahyar Wardaki family.

On the eve of Nowroz, the central circle met in Mirza Aslam's house, planning and approving the assassination plan. Goljan was also attending the meeting. He

introduced two other men as his sincere friends and pledged they were ready to provide a quantity of arms to the group. Of course, Goljan, as an active and trusted member, was aware of the assassination plan. Later, after his release from prison, Seyyid Ismail Balkhi told me that soon after the meeting Goljan left and informed the prime minister. The next day before sunrise, the government arrested all 11 members of the central circle and put them in prison, where they remained from 1950 to 1964. During this period, they were tortured with solitary confinement, and they were also deprived of sleep, visits of relatives, reading books, and smoking habits. Feeling guilty of having committed a grave error, Mirza Aslam suffered most, for he had introduced Goljan to the party. In return for his service, Goljan received awards from the government. Later, however, his son killed him for betraying his bride.

### **The Student Union of Kabul University**

Kabul University students played an active role in the country's political movements. They established ties with political circles, the free press, and the leftist faction of the parliament. Finally, in 1950 they established the Student Union, which was the first student union in the country's history. Higher school classes in Kabul also stood behind the union, together with the opposition intellectuals, political circles, and teachers. The union had its own program, with central and contact committees.

Later in 1950, the government abolished the Student Union and expelled some of its leading members from the university, including Mir Ali Ahmad Shamel, Seyyid M. Maiwand, Mohsen Taheri, Habib Safi, and Haidar Nowras. Three other members-Azim Taheri, Shah Ali Akbar Shahrestani, and Akhtar Baraki-faced expulsion for one year from the university. Later Shamel was put in prison (1957-1962), while M. Yunes Sorkhabi, another member, was imprisoned and then banished outside Kabul. Other members of the executive committee were Seyyid M. Maiwand (He was also expelled from the university and banished), M. Naim Kandahari, Asad Hassan Ghobar, M. Aref Ghausi, Babrak (He was also expelled from the university and imprisoned for taking part in the demonstration during the parliamentary election-1952-1956), M. Hassan Sharq (Babrak and Sharq belonged to the Sardar M. Daud group), M. Yahya Abawi, Habib Khan Del, Abdol Wahed Waziri, M. Ishaq Osman, Hedyat Khan, M. Ebrahim, and a few others.

However, soon the union's executive committee split into two right and left factions. The Student Union held meetings and conferences, and it staged at the Istaqlal School Theater socially critical and educational dramas as a class campaign. The dramas, exhibiting corruption, motivated the youths and positively affected Kabuli families. The Kabul school teachers-such as Maulawi Abdol Zaher Paghmani,

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M. Islam Mayin, and many others-not only sympathized with the students, they also joined their ranks. The government, fearing the new youth political movement, abolished the seven-month old Student Union in November 1950.



### **The Seventh Parliamentary Campaigns (1949-1951)**

Shah Mahmud announced free and secret election for the Seventh National Assembly. A number of intellectuals in Kabul and provinces took part in the election and announced their nominations. The government also sent to the Parliament a number of its own henchmen. At this time, Abdol Hadi Dawi, Zaher Shah's secretary, who had till now retained his past fame, joined the Parliament as its speaker, representing the Dehsabz district of Kabul. The new 171-member Parliament was now composed of three groups: the anti-government intellectuals, the pro-government elements, and the independents. Nevertheless, the representatives came from different classes: landowners and merchants, clerics, intellectuals from the middle and lower classes, village elders, etc.

After the formation of the Parliament and the election of its presidential body-president, two assistants, and a secretary-the government's interference became tangible, with the king's dictating the appointment of the president. This caused a division among the government's supporters, the people's delegates, and the neutral group in the Parliament. The opposition intellectuals refrained from nominating a candidate for the presidential body. With Abdol Hadi Dawi remaining as the only candidate for the presidency, there was no need for a secret ballot. The pro-government group put up a ballot box and nominated another candidate for the presidency by the name of Golabshah Lugari. The intellectuals cast blank votes in the ballot box. Golabshah won only one vote, while Dawi automatically won the election and became president of the Parliament. In the same way, Abdol Rashid was elected first deputy and Abdol Azim as secretary of the Parliament. The intellectuals voted for Golpacha Olfat, the candidate of the Weesh Zalmyan, who became second deputy.

During the oath-taking ceremony-which was the oath of allegiance to the nation, the king, and the government-the opposition intellectuals refused to name the government in their oaths. Contrary to the old rule, they took the oath of allegiance to the country and the nation. This movement escalated tension between the pro-government right wing and the parliamentary opposition, particularly after the opposition managed to gain the majority votes for forming committees, electing their presidents and secretaries.

The same committees drafted new legislation for the internal duties of the Parliament, the new election law in a relatively democratic way, the law for enacting and amending the Constitution, the property law, the employment law, and the retirement and promotion law. For the first time in the country's parliamentary history, the committees also summoned and questioned some Cabinet ministers. With the support of the majority in the Parliament, the committees became an inspector of the government's actions, and it passed important decisions in the country's domestic and foreign policies.

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For instance, the National Assembly expressed its views on the king's inauguration speech on July 1, 1949 and published it in the official newspapers. The king's speech had relied on three points: "First, in view of the demands of today's world, the government of Afghanistan will review its past plans and submit them to the Parliament. Second, in foreign policy, the government will mutually respect the rights of others, make efforts in maintaining world peace, and observe the UN Charter. Third, Pakistan has misinterpreted Afghanistan's intentions, caused trouble in political and trade transactions, and launched air attacks on Afghanistan."

The National Assembly supported the first two points. With regard to the third point, it officially published the following decision: "The people of Afghanistan are troubled by the obstacles created by Pakistan against the Afghan trade and politics. The barriers that Pakistan raises against the people in the Afghan frontier provinces from Chitral to Baluchistan with regard to their rights to vote, to establish free organization, to have their independence, have also disturbed the Afghan people. The Parliament does not consider itself legally committed to any treaty or contract that the Afghan governments had signed with Britain before the creation of Pakistan. The Parliament does not recognize the imposed Durand-Line as a border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Therefore, the Parliament will not refrain from any cooperation with the government in eliminating trade and political problems posed by Pakistan and in securing freedom and national independence for all Afghan brothers. It will also assist the government to determine its policy in accordance to the demands of the time and the international situation. The National Assembly also demands retribution for the damages caused by Pakistan's bombardments." (See the Saratan 1328 issues of *Islah* and *Anis* newspapers)

Henceforth, the opposition, with the support of the majority of the Parliament, decided to change the government's phony democracy to real democracy by the people. The National Assembly uncovered the government's unknown budget, which was kept secret for 20 years. It removed from a meager budget of less than 500 million afghanis the luxury and extravagant expenses of certain government departments, customary stipends to certain parasite families, and hundreds of other unnecessary items. It condemned the government for lacking accurate accounting. Having reviewed the Helmand Project and contract with the American Morrison & Kanudson, the National Assembly leveled charges against three ministers-M. Kabir Ludin, the minister of public works; Abdol Majid Zaboli, the minister of economy; and Mir Haidar Hosayni, the minister of finance-and announced them to be tried by a high court.

The National Assembly in a seven-article resolution abolished forced labor, forced purchase of grain from landowners and farmers by the government, taxes from uncouncted cattle, and collection of taxes outside the tax law.

It abolished the new taxes imposed by Kabul municipality on small craftsmen, such as water-carriers, apprentices, shopkeepers, and poor peddlers. It inspected the government's cooperative depot and criticized it.

The Parliament, with its committees, during its three legislative years reviewed and debated several administrative, economic, cultural, health, and other social issues, presenting useful proposals and disclosing government's flaws, damages, and treason. Finally, it called for summoning the prime minister, the king's uncle, with his puppet Cabinet, before the representatives for vote of confidence-a demand that shook the establishment of tyranny and regression.

But how could the government see the National Assembly causing the collapse of the ruling family and stirring the people against plunder and extortion? Thus, it sent its own hired group against the Parliament, annulling its resolutions by force, conspiracy, threat, and coercion, suppressing the opposition, and resuming the old disgraceful oppression. These were the government supporters in the National Assembly: Abdol Hadi Dawi (president of the Assembly) Abdol Rashid Alakuzai (deputy-president), Abdol Azim Safi (the secretary of the Assembly), Mufti Salahadin Saljuqi (former president of the press), Sardar M. Sadiq Waziri (a former governor), M. Yusof Ami Siqani, M. Othman Sorkhrudi, Seyyid Omar Baghlani, Abdol Qayum Moqori, M. Kabuli Ghurbandi, Seyyid Mahmud Ghaznawi, M. Karim Chaharikari, Golabshah Lugari, M. Shah Katawazi, and Abu al-Khair Maimanagai. Behind them were a handful of conservative representatives, and behind all of them was Shah Mahmud, the powerful prime minister of Afghanistan.

In the Parliament, a united front of national representatives stood against the pro-government group. It consisted of independent individuals, with a number of them associated with political parties. The non-party independent group included Abdol Hay Habibi, M. Karim Nazihi, Nazar M. Nawa, M. Qassem Saripoli, M. Anwar Bagrami, Abdol Awal Qoraishi, Amir M. Sarubi, Mahbub Nangarhari, Seyyid Ahmad Khan Kuhdamani, Gholam Ali Jaghuri, Shir Ahmad Qarabaghi, M. Nasim Laghmani, Mir Omar Khust-Frangi, Ahmad Madani Tashqorqani, Abdol Hakim Bagram, M. Yusof Paghmani, M. Yunos Katawazi, Dorani Kuchi, Din M. Khan, Musa Khan Mashreqi, and several others from other provinces. Members of the group associated with political circles were Mir Gholam M. Ghobar, Seyyid M. Dehqan, Sakhi Amin Dushi, and M. Taher Ghaznawi from the Watan Party; Dr. Abdol Rahman Mahmudi, Khal M. Khasta, and Nur Alam Mazlumi from the Khalq Party; Golpacha Olfat and Nur M. Panjawai from Weesh Zalmiyan.

Later, it was known that Seyyid Ismail, representative of Sorkh Parsa district, belonged to the secret Itihad Party. Altogether, 50 members of the Parliament belonged to the opposition group, which had the support of the majority in important matters-a group that opened a path of fundamental changes in the internal and political life of the country. (Some foreign historians, judging from

outside, have misunderstood the composition and activities of the political parties' representatives in the Parliament and outside.)

The government did not refrain from resorting to force, conspiracy, and threat in undermining the opposition activities in the Parliament. For example, during the three legislative years, the presidential body, particularly the president of the Parliament, did not include the proposals of the committees, or those of the majority, in the general agenda of the general sessions because the proposals demanded amendment of the past laws and legislation of new laws. Only 16 articles of the 115 articles of the new legislation project for the internal duties of the Parliament drafted by the legislation committee and approved by the majority were read in the general assembly for a period of three years.

The presidential body rejected the new election law before reaching the general assembly. The resolutions of the general assembly-pertaining to annulment of taxes outside the law, mandatory grain purchase from farmers, forced labor, and property confiscation, with the resolution that called for the court trial of the ministers of finance, economy, and public works, which the king should have endorsed and enforced-were kept in the dossiers of the Parliament's presidency. Furthermore, for three years, only once the Parliament's magazine was published, and that with a great deal of distortion.

The president handed the Parliament's anti-government resolutions to the prime minister instead of the king. He himself took part in the Cabinet sessions when important issues were being debated. Fearing the opposition, which had the majority, Abdol Rashid, the Parliament's first deputy, was put in charge of presiding over important sessions. Instead of passing out voting slips, he only asked the delegates to raise their hands, and he did not care to count them. He interrupted speeches of the opposition members and distarted Parliament's written resolutions.

Furthermore, the government's henchmen inside the Parliament accused and abused the speakers on the left side to such a degree that once Allah Mir Khan, the representative of Tani in Paktia, was incited to attack Dr. Mahmudi and this writer with a knife. In another incident, Abdol Qayum, the representative of Moqor, threw a chair at me. Golajan, the representative of Jaji, hurled his chair on M. Anwar Khan's head, the Bagrami delegate, thus igniting a clash in the Parliament hall. One evening, a gang of government's henchmen ambushed Mahmudi and assaulted him severely. Another time, they threw him in a car and drove him out of Kabul, pretending he was sick and being taken to a hospital, while on the way they kept beating him. Luckily, he managed to throw himself out of the car and escape. The prime minister himself led a number of his surrogate representatives – such as Mufti Salahadin Saljuqi, Sardar M. Sadiq Waziri, Abdol Rashid Alakuzai, and their group-against the opposition in the Parliament.

However, the opposition had a worse situation outside the Parliament, with the government's agents spreading cruel propaganda, branding them as traitors to

the country and lackeys of foreign countries. Hired writers and state newspapers published satirical articles and poems against the opposition leaders, directing scandals and insults against them. Mufti Salahadin Saljuqi, Mawlawi Borhanaddin Koshkaki, Abdol Sabur Nasimi, M. Akbar Etamadi, and others wrote columns in *Anis* to serve this purpose. The president of the Press, M. Hashem Maindwal, constantly fined and banned the party newspapers-*Ingar*, *Watan*, and *Nadaye Khalq* – without any investigation or trial. Finally, he banned all of them.

The government's pressure on the opposition was so intense that some Parliamentary members broke away with the opposition and joined the neutrals to save themselves from inevitable future dangers. Abdol Hay Habibi was exposed to so much pressure that he had to escape before the end of his term from Afghanistan to Pakistan. However, several years later, he returned to Afghanistan and joined the writers.

The government put in prison Mahmudi and this writer after the end of their terms in the Parliament. It fabricated a legal case against Seyyid M. Dehqan, kept him occupied in courts in Badakhshan and Balkh, finally seized his lands and drove him out of the political scene. It sent Nur Alam Mazlumi from Maidan, his native birthplace, to Taleqan, where he lived for several years, and arrested M. Taher Ghaznawi. Khal M. Khasta faced conscription in old age. It put other vanguards of the opposition under pressure in different ways in Kabul and provinces, barring them from nominating themselves for the Eighth Parliament. The government also increased its cruel treatment of members of the opposition families. For instance, after my imprisonment, the government expelled my daughters and sons from schools and faculties of Kabul University and forced my brothers to retire from their posts.

In contrast, the government rewarded its own henchmen and leaders of the regression. It appointed Abdol Hadi Dawi and Mufti Salahadin Saljuqi as ambassadors to Egypt and Indonesia. Sardar M. Sadiq Waziri and M. Karim Farutan became governors of provinces. M. Othman Sorkhrudi became governor of a rural district. Abdol Rashid Alakuzai was installed as the president of the Eighth Parliament. The rest of the gang entered the Parliament again as appointed representatives. For several years, the government abolished the elected Parliament and restored the old order.

### **Kabul Municipality**

The Kabul municipality held free election one year before the Seventh Parliament, in which a number of opposition intellectuals gained victory. Some of them delivered speeches in municipal rallies, creating for the first time a movement in Kabul. A group of them gained through the election the executive and

administrative municipal powers, together with the city council. Members of the group included Gholam M. Ferhad, mayor of Kabul; Mir M. Sadiq Ferhang and Abdollah Wahedi, deputies of the mayor, with M. Hosayn Nahzat, secretary of the mayor; Serwer Juya, M. Asef Ahang, Shir M. Assiaban, and others as members of the council.

In a short time, they managed to re-structure Kabul municipality, with a re-organization of the city offices, districts, and the budget. They surfaced the city roads with asphalt. They built parks, new residential sections, and Pamir Cinema. They extended the New Maiwand and Nader-Pashtun roads. They also published the *Baladi Magazine*. In this way, the elected Kabul municipality gained public attention and credibility. Nobody could deny the fact that the city elected administration was far better than the old appointed administration was. Of course, the government, finding this to be against its ultimate goals, used its agents to start undermining the city elected administration, which was later turned into an appointed institution.

### **Election Demonstrations in Kabul City**

At the end of 1951, the three-year term of the Seventh Parliament ended, and the government announced April 20, 1952 as a new election day. The Shah Mahmud government, which had until now silenced all political movements, political parties-including the Student Union-and banned the independent newspapers, was intent on perpetuating the stagnation. For the ruling family did not want to be compelled to carry out the reforms, which the domestic and international conditions had imposed on it, in the shadow of those political movements. In contrast, it wanted to force the people and their deputies to return to their back seats in order to carry out from the above a portion of the reform that would benefit the ruling family. For this reason, once again Shah Mahmud took charge of suppressing all of the new movements, so that the monarchy could monopolize the initiative in carrying out any new reform.

Having suppressed all of the political movements, Shah Mahmud prevented the free election of the leftist intellectuals in the Eighth Parliament, while a number of the opposition deputies, including Mahmudi and this writer, announced their nominations from Kabul for the Seventh Parliament. Opposition candidates were Seyyid M. Dehqan, Khal M. Khasta, Nazar M. Nawa, Nur Alam Maidani, and a few others from the provinces. The government, with a disgraceful face, was now openly meddling in the election. In Kabul, the cavalry and the police were patrolling the city, driving out from the polling stations the election observers of Mahmudi and Ghobar. Government officials and judges wrote the vote cast for Mahmudi and Ghobar under the names of the government's candidates in the Voting Book, in

place of voting boxes. The Kabul governor, Abdol Hakim Shah Alami, used the police, armed with clubs, to drive away the protesters from the voting stations and to send to prisons those who resisted the police.

They also threw into prison Dad Mohammad Kandak Meshr known as Landai, a hero of the Independence War. He died in the winter of that year in Dehmazang Prison after suffering from a disease that was not treated. They also detained a number of others at the Shirpur Police Headquarters.

This galvanized a public reaction against the government's dictatorial behavior. First, the people boycotted the election and left the polling stations. Then an unusually massive demonstration was staged in Kabul, with thousands of shopkeepers, craftsmen, government functionaries, Kabul University students, with high school students, supporters of the Khalq and Watan parties, with their candidates. These slogans appeared on their banners: "Our national representatives are Ghobar and Mahmudi." At every intersection, they delivered strong speeches against the government's interference in the elections. After crossing the major city roads, they headed toward the Arg Palace in the afternoon. A cavalry was moving behind the demonstrators. This was the first political demonstration that directly addressed the king and condemned his Cabinet.

The court had fortified the two sides of the Arg Street with military vehicles blocking the Arg gate, with machineguns placed on its rooftop. (Later, the Arg walls and towers were stone-built) The people's candidates in the demonstration delivered fiery speeches against the government. The Arg guards received the demonstrators' written statement, which had condemned the government and called for holding another election. On behalf of the king, the guards announced that the king would convey his words to the public the following day. The demonstrators decided that they would gather on the compound of Istaqlal School to hear the king's reply the following day. In this way, the demonstration temporarily ended.

However, that night the authorities intentionally flooded the Istaqlal School compound located at the vicinity of the Arg. Kabul Radio announced that holding any rally was against the law and the offenders would be pursued. Subsequently, military units, with armored vehicles, moved on the city streets for 24 hours. The following day, the state newspapers published the results of the rigged election, which consisted of 7, 380 votes because most of the voters in Kabul had boycotted the election. However, the people of Kabul had cast more than 50,000 votes in parliament election three years before, of which 28,000 belonged to Ghobar and Mahmudi, while now the two government candidates had obtained only 4, 798 votes.

In addition, after the demonstration, the government put under police surveillance the movements and houses of the executive bodies of the Watan Party and the Khalq Party. Seventeen days later, the government put into prison 14

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members of the Watan Party and 6 members of the Khalq Party, imprisoning them from one to four and even eleven years without any investigation and trial.



## **Effects of the Political Movements**

Altogether, the activities of the political parties, the Student Union, the opposition Parliament, the election demonstrations, and the party organs had a significant impact on the public mind, the political system, and the social-economic systems of the country within a few years from 1947 to 1951. It expanded the public demand for freedom and democracy. It also activated the national and democratic forces in public life and opened a path for new thoughts in social relations. Intellectual circles began to talk about new ideologies. In this way, a change was created in the country's political life, whose radius spread to remote parts of the country.

This political movement called for the abolition of the privilege and political monopoly of the ruling family, the abolition of privilege and economic monopoly of big money holders, the abolition of aristocracy and oligarchy. It called for freedom and equality. It talked about the interests of farmers, craftsmen, workers, and low-ranking government's employees. In foreign policy, it advocated a positive non-alignment policy. For the first time, the WP paper wrote in support of strengthening the Third World and the active non-alignment policy. Although the monarchy banned all of these movements, it was not able to eradicate their effects on the Afghan society and return the country to the past state of stagnation. Thus, it was Shah Mahmud who failed forever.

Shah Mahmud had faced defeat in the areas of reform and new administration. He resigned in September 1953 and died of heart attack in 1959 in Laghman province. He bequeathed to a line of heirs what he had left behind after his death.

Another separate volume should cover the history of Afghanistan during the next 20 years of the ruling family (1953 -1973).

### **In a few words:**

After the end of the Shah Mahmud government, Mohammad Daud formed his Cabinet in 1953. During this period, the monarchy re-established the old military government, suppressing any gasp of freedom.

Following the fall of the Daud government in 1963, the government declared "democracy" – sometimes also called "Afghan Islamic democracy" and sometimes "crowned democracy" by officials. Some opponents called it "phony democracy."

In the meantime, some government-connected parties emerged under the slogan of socialism. With the government support, these parties began to neutralize the activities of honest opposition intellectuals. This was the appearance of the matter. In reality, the same old aristocracy and absolutism of the monarchy persisted, while the prime ministers of the period-such as M.Yusof, M. Hashem Maiwandwal, Nur Ahmad Etamadi, Dr. Abdol Zaher, and Musa Shafiq-were the old servants of the monarchy, who had served as ambassadors and ministers in the previous dictatorial regimes.

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After the end of this “pretentious democracy,” which aimed at disparaging and failing democracy in Afghanistan, once again a member of the royal family (Mohammad Daud) in 1973 declared Afghanistan a republic from the above, starting again the old tyranny. Until the writing of this book, the future of the country, as in the past, is dark and unknown.

**Mir Gholam M. Ghobar**  
Kabul City, 1973

\* \* \*

## **Annex**

### **Short Biography of Mir Gholam Mohamad Ghobar (also spelled Gobar and Ghubar)**

Mir Gholam M. Ghobar, son of Mirza Mir Mahbub, was born in 1898 in Kabul. He received a private education, with most of his studies in the fields of history, literature, philosophy, and social sciences. His youth coincided with the beginning of a social change in Afghanistan when Kabul witnessed publication of newspapers, establishment of private libraries, and emergence of visible and invisible opposition intellectual circles. Subsequently, a political revolution and a vigorous social change emerged. As a result, Afghanistan gained victory in its third war against Britain. These events created a favorable atmosphere for social changes by the young generation even though it did not last more than a decade.

#### **His Occupations during the Amanollah Regime:**

- Editor of the weekly *Stara-e-Afghan*(*Afghan Star*) (1919- 1920)  
(This publication, containing critical and reformist articles, was published in two pages in Jabal Seraj and Charikar.)
- President of a public security department (1920-1921)
- Member of Herat Tanzimiya (provincial administration) in 1921
- Deputy assistant of the Amania Company and its trade representative in a Moscow exhibition in 1924
- Secretary of Afghanistan's Embassy in Paris in 1926
- Director of customs in Qataghan-Badakhshan province (1927).
- Elected representative of Kabul in the Paghman Loye Jirga in 1928.

#### **His Occupations during the Rule of the Nadir Shah Family:**

- First secretary of Afghan Embassy to Berlin in 1930 (later he resigned from this position and returned to Afghanistan to directly participate in the campaign against the tyranny of Nadir Shah)
- Member of Kabul Literary Association in 1931-1932
- **Political Imprisonment (1933- 1935):**  
He was imprisoned because of the assassinations of three staffs of the British Embassy by Mohammad Azim.

## **AFGHANISTAN IN THE COURSE OF HISTORY**

- He was banished to Farah and Kandahar because of the same incident (1935-1942)
- Member of the History Association in Kabul (1943 – 1948)
- Representative of Kabul citizens for the Seventh Parliament (1949- 1951)
- Founder and secretary of Watan Party, as well as founder and chief editor of the WP publication organ (1951 – 1952) (The Watan Newspaper, a critical paper, published in four pages, was banned by the government in 1951. The government also suspended the party in 1952 and officially dissolved it in 1956.)
- Political Imprisonment (1952 – 1956)

He, with a number of his party colleagues, was imprisoned on charges of leading an election demonstration.

- For the next 20 years (1956 – 1978), Ghobar –liberal political activist and patriot, writer and journalist, and historian- who was under the pressure and surveillance of the ruling family, had to confine to his residence his political and scholarly activities. He was widely known as an active national liberationist, journalist, writer, and historian. During this period, he wrote *Afghanistan in the Course of History*. During this period, the government banned the publication of his articles and books, including the publication of the first volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History*. The government also prevented him from being elected in the Parliament during the second period of the so-called “state democracy.”

- Death (February 5, 1978)

Ghobar went to West Berlin for stomach treatment. On February 5, 1978, he died in a hospital in Berlin. He died a few months before the coup of the Soviet-installed regime in Kabul. He was buried in his ancestral Shohadaye Salehin cemetery in Kabul.

Before his death, he had stated in his will that several hundred rare books of his private library be given to a public library. The books were granted to Kabul Public Library after his death.

He had also stated in his will these words: “I wish my children to have the bless of faith in unity of God, and success in service and compassion for the poor and humankind, which will bring them peace of mind and conscience, with optimism in life and death.”

Ghobar was deeply affected by human suffering, particularly the suffering of the oppressed. As a small child, I (Hashmat Gobar) remember one cold snowing winter day when I was walking with my father on Walayer Street in Kabul. He was holding my hand. We came across an old man sitting in a corner, shivering. His dignified look was full of sadness and pain. He was wearing a frayed shirt and trousers. My father took off his coat and gave it to the old man. He spent the rest of the winter without a coat because he had no other extra coat and could not afford to buy one. That day under heavy snowing, I witnessed his profound humanitarian feeling.

He advised his children to help the poor, as he was committed to serving them. He dedicated his life to this cause, never succumbing to governments in his campaign against oppression and threat to his life. From his prison and exile, he never wrote any plea to the government. Having failed to break him by chain and captivity, the ruling family desperately resorted through their agents to extensive negative propaganda against him.

During the second period of "democracy," when the government used violence and conspiracy to block his election to the Parliament, a government agent at a gathering of Kabul residents at Zainab Theater, where Ghobar was making a speech, mentioned that Ghobar's release from prison indicated his compromise with the government. Ghobar replied, "Tyrannical governments do not refrain from cowardly conspiracies and propaganda against their opponents. With conspiracy, the government, which holds the prison key, can imprison or release anyone it wishes. However, here before a number of government's agents, I am challenging the government to show whatever evidence it has regarding my compromise or surrender in all my political life so that everybody may know. They do not have such an evidence, but I will write the real history of the people of Afghanistan, in which I will reveal documents about the oppressive governments and the persons related to them." He fulfilled his promise by writing *Afghanistan in the Course of History*.

During the reign of the ruling family, he courageously told the truth, which is vividly manifested in his book *Afghanistan in the Course of History*. For example, Nadir Shah and later M. Daud, two most autocratic rulers of the country, asked Ghobar to cooperate with their despotic regimes. In rejecting these offers that Ghobar considered against the public interests, he had to accept years of captivity, banishment, and home surveillance. (See the second volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History*)

However, others, not being able to resist the threats of the oppressors, capitulated out of fear. (For example, Mir M. Sadiq Ferhang, threatened by Daud, changed his line. Within a few years, he gradually fell into the bosom of the ruling family by accepting such posts as deputy minister and ambassador to Yugoslavia. Later, when Babrak Karmal, with the Soviet tanks and artillery was installed as the head of the Soviet puppet regime in Kabul, Ferhang served as official advisor to Karmal during that dark and bloody period in Afghanistan). Because of personal interests, positions, material privileges, and for attracting the attention of oppressive rulers and foreign invaders, these individuals deviated from the path of the people and truth. Later, to justify their deeds, they and their relatives leveled accusations against patriotic dissidents.

During the reign of the ruling family, servants of the oppressors flattered, and distorted the history of the country. After the fall of the ruling family, suddenly they changed course, writing "borrowed" history and distorted "memoirs," with lies from

start to end. They distorted the episodes of their services to the oppressors. (For example, Seyyid Qassem Reshtiya, who had held ministerial and ambassadorial posts during the reign of the ruling family, had become so accustomed to them, that he tried to gain another post in the new Soviet-puppet regime of Nur Mohammad Taraki in Kabul, without having the slightest regard for Afghanistan's national interests. Therefore, he set out to please the regime. In a televised meeting held by the puppet regime against the former ruling family, Reshtiya severely attacked his old benefactors and called them "the Al-Yahya Family traitors," whom he had addressed in the past as "His Majesty and His Highness" for a half century and had distorted the history of Afghanistan to please them. In the same way, he wrote several articles in the newspapers. After the collapse of the communists, Reshtiya changed course again. To please the former king, Mohammad Zahir Shah, he included in his memoirs the photo of the king standing with him and his brother, Mir M. Sadiq Ferhang.) When Ghobar lived in captivity, exile, and under house surveillance and harassment, these gentlemen were ministers, ambassadors, and advisors, living a life of comfort and pleasure inside and abroad.

I remember a day when a covert agent of the ruling family visited our house on the Walayet Street. In a casual conversation with my father, he tried to discover the real writer of an article about Reshtiya titled "Yesterday's Thief, Today's President and Minister of Tomorrow." Of course, he failed to identify the author. Later, however, he disclosed the purpose of his visit by imparting to Ghobar the hidden threat of the ruling family in apparent "good-will" and "friendly" language. For example, he asked Ghobar: What would become of his three daughters in the future, if Ghobar went to prison again because of his political activities? Ghobar asked this person, "What is the population of Afghanistan?" He said, "About 12 or 15 million people." Ghobar replied, "Half of this figure, about 8 million, are women. How can I quit my struggle in defending the rights of 8 million daughters and mothers of this nation because of my three daughters?"

Ghobar left behind his wife, Lady Saleha, with seven children: Maria Ghobar, Rona Ghobar, Donia Ghobar, Asa'd Hassan Ghobar, Ashraf Shahab Ghobar, Ebrahim Adham Ghobar, and Hashmat Khalil Ghobar. In his diary, he wrote these words about his wife: "Lady Saleha is a literate and industrious woman, a companion of my life, a partner in all of my distressing and dangerous adventures, a woman of patience and courage, who has raised virtuous children and endured a great deal of hardship."

### **Ghobar's Works**

It is worth saying that until 70 years ago the history of Afghanistan, with all of its richness, remained obscure and confused in the folds of the historical works of

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others who wrote about Afghanistan. Even in the Afghan schools of the time, the teaching of Afghanistan's history covered Afghanistan since the 18<sup>th</sup> century-an approach that terribly harmed the culture, the history, the national honor and unity of the country. As it appears, Ghobar was the first person that sensed this serious flaw and corrected it by being a pioneer in writing the history of Afghanistan, opening the path for new historians to follow. By writing *Afghanistan in the Course of History*, forty years later, Ghobar introduced an advanced form of analytical historiography.

1- The first volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History*, in 840 pages, was first printed in 3000 copies by Kabul Public Printing House in 1967. The government banned the book before its publication. More than 15, 000 thousand copies of the book were printed outside the country. This is the first scholarly written history of Afghanistan, which starts from the beginning of the historical period to the early second quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Details about the First Edition of *Afghanistan in the Course of History***

The Book Publishing Institution signed an official contract with Ghobar to print the first volume of the *Afghanistan in the Course of History* in 3000 copies, of which the author was to receive 300 hundred copies. (The institution was part of the Ministry of Information, headed by Abdol Rauf Binawa, and Hashem Maiwandwal was the then prime minister.) However, after its last page came out of the print, the ruling family immediately banned the book without any official announcement. Later, the new Prime Minister, Nur Ahmad Etamadi, a grand son of Sardar Sultan Mohammad Talayi, officially announced the banning of the book at a hearing session of the Parliament without the ruling of a legal court.

Mohammad Anas (a grandson of Amir Dost Mohammad), the new minister of information, officially summoned Ghobar at the ministry to seize about forty copies of the book he had already obtained. (Hashmat Khalil Ghobar had already taken out the books from the printing house on the contract basis.) With threatening words, he told Ghobar: "You have passed most of your life in prison and banishment, shackles have become tired of your feet, and yet you dare to write such a book?" Ghobar replied: "You have not seen my house; there is only a mud wall separating it from Kabul Prison (at that time, Ghobar's house was at the vicinity of the prison). My own room is smaller than the cell I lived in this prison. Therefore, any imprisonment threat will not affect me at all. I considered writing the real history of the Afghan people as my duty. The legal way for you is to lift the ban on the history I wrote and then the government, with all its facility, can assign some of its hired writers, who in the past distorted events in the country's history, to write against it."

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As long as the ruling family was in power, the first volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History* was banned. A few months after Ghobar passed away, a communist coup overthrew the government and a Soviet-installed regime came to power in 1978. Only one month after it took power, the new regime lifted the ban and allowed the book to be published, hoping to win the public support. However, the regime, decided to stop the distribution of the book three days after it noticed that it had a strong national spirit against foreign aggression, but during the first three days, about 3000 copies had sold out, with nothing left to be banned.

The first volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History* was printed seven more times outside Afghanistan, selling more than 50,000 copies. Some rumors spread by one or two politically or materially biased individuals that the original copy had been tampered with in the later editions published outside the country, are completely false. All of the subsequent publications of the book have been from the original copy without any change.

2- The second volume of *Afghanistan in the Course of History* was written in 1973 in Kabul, but it was not possible to publish it because of M. Daud's suppressive regime. In his will, Ghobar had entrusted his son (Hashmat Ghobar) to preserve the manuscript of the second volume and print it in an appropriate time. The successive oppressive regimes and then the foreign aggression in Afghanistan blocked and delayed its publication. Providing funds for the publication was another delaying factor. Finally, the original Persian text, without the slightest change, was printed in 285 pages by Speedy Printing in June 1999 in Virginia, USA. And now the English translation of the second volume is published. The book covers the eventful years of the second quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

3- *Afghanistan and a View of Its History* is about the geographical history of Afghanistan. It was published in 190 pages in the first-year's issues of Majallah-e Kabul (from the second issue to the 12<sup>th</sup> issue) by Kabul General Printing in 1931.

4- *Afghanistan in India*, in 95 pages, is the history of the expansion of Afghanistan's political influence in India. It was published in the first nine issues of Majallah-e Kabul (Kabul Magazine, 1932).

5- *Brief History of Afghanistan*, in 68 illustrated pages, covers Afghanistan from the ancient time of Avesta to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was published in the first edition of Kabul *Salnameh* (Year Book) in 1932 with an appendix of the ancient names of Afghanistan and its provinces.

6- *Ahmad Shah Baba*, printed in Kabul in 1943, in 352 pages, covers the historical events of Afghanistan in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Before publishing this book,



Ghobar had made available a portion of its manuscript to Abdol Hay Habibi, who often visited Ghobar during his exile in Kandahar. Later, Habibi went to Kabul, where he wrote a detailed introduction to *Ahmad Shah's Divan* (book of poetry) and published it. He used a portion of Ghobar's manuscript in writing about the birth date, the birthplace, coronation, works, the administration, and other aspects of Ahmad Shah's reign in his introduction, which he printed in 1940. Habibi did not acknowledge the source of the introduction, but he also, as the deputy director of the Press and Information Department, in a written statement called the publication of Ghobar's book against the national interests of the country. After returning to Kabul after his banishment, Ghobar mentioned this issue in the introduction of his work.

7- *Resala-e Khorasan* (Essay on Khorasan) is a research about Khorasan as the old name of Afghanistan for a thousand years. Based on reliable historical and geographical documents, this essay was published in 100 pages in 1947 in Kabul.

8- *Essay on Local Afghan Rulers* was published in 58 pages in Ariana Magazine (issues 11-12 in 1933 and issues 3-7 in 1934)

9- *Emergence of Islam and Arab Influence in Afghanistan*, in 112 pages, was published in the third volume of *Afghanistan's History* in 1947 in Kabul

10 - *History of First Centuries*, in 226 pages, was published as a high school textbook, with the cooperation of Dost Mohammad, a history teacher, in Kabul in 1947.

11- *Afghanistan in a Glance*, in 284 pages, was published in 1947 in Kabul. The ruling family did not like the sheet related to the Mohammadzai period; therefore, it assigned Najibollah Khan, the minister of education, who was related to the family, to replace the sheet after the first print, by a sheet of his own writing without the permission of Ghobar

12 - *Literature in the Mohammadzai Period* (the fifth section of *Afghanistan's Literary History*), in 81 pages, was published in Kabul in 1952.

13 - A series of historical, social and political essays, biographies of noted Afghan figures, and introductions to a number of manuscripts on the history of Afghanistan were published in Kabul periodicals and *Encyclopedia of Afghanistan*, some of which appeared in various issues of *Ariana Magazine* in 1943-49.

14 - Ghobar's famous article titled "*Our Economy*" was published in *Islah* on October 9, 1946.

The article was critical of the economic approach and a number of top capitalists and merchants, led by Abdol Majid Zaboli, the minister of economy. They had formed a partnership with the ruling family and by gaining massive profits were increasing poverty to the poor and destroying the economy of the city and rural middle class, small merchants and businessmen. The article, caused a great deal of commotion, and the government threatened Ghobar in person in a Cabinet meeting and punished the editor of the *Islah* newspaper. Mohammad Akbar Etamadi and Ebrahim Afifi tried to defend Zaboli by writing against the article.

15 - Ghobar was also the editor of the weekly *Stara-e Afghān* (Afghan Star) paper, which was published in two pages from Jabal Seraj and then Charikar in 1919-1920. The purpose of publishing the paper was to keep alive the spirit of jihad against British imperialism at the threshold of the Afghan war of independence. In his later articles in the paper, Ghobar adopted a critical view with regard to the government management.

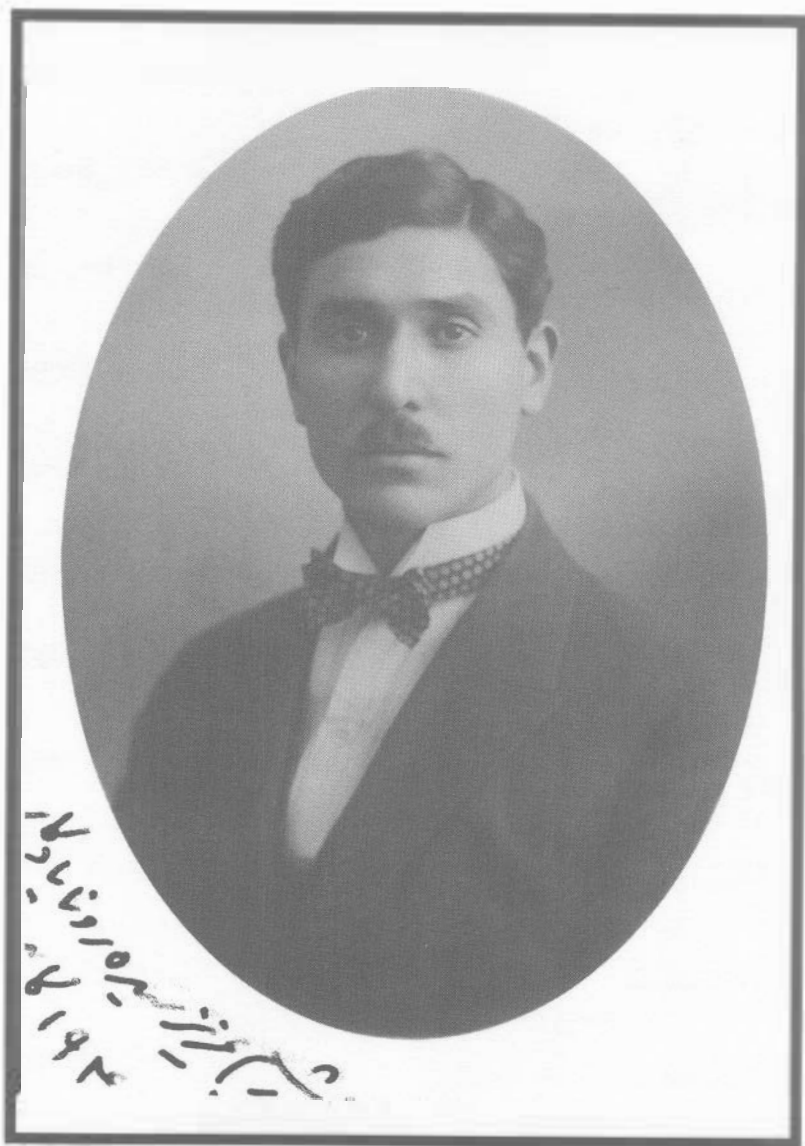
16 - Ghobar was also the founder and chief editor of the weekly *Watan Newspaper* (1950-51), which was the organ of the Watan Party in Kabul and was banned by the government.

17- *The Literary History of Afghanistan* from the early historical period to the 20th century (not published).

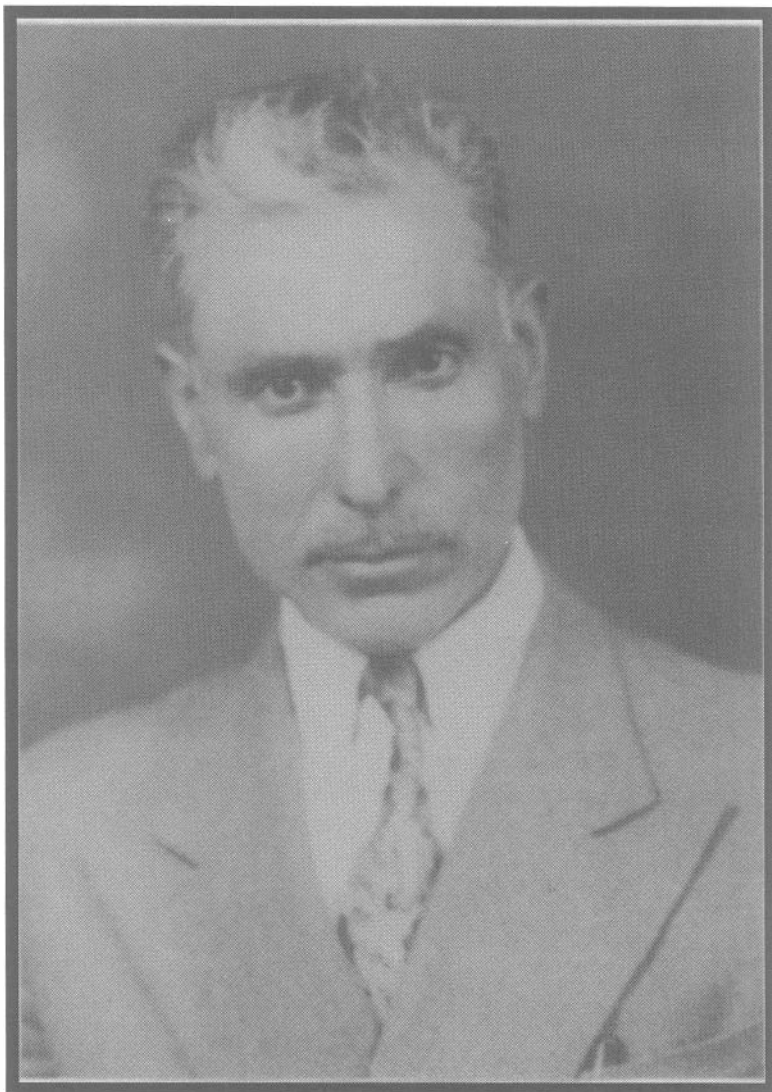
18- *Ghobar's Notes* (not published)

It should be remembered that Ghobar wrote most of his works under the iron heel of tyranny; therefore, some distortions were imposed by the state censorship, such as deletion or addition or change of words, sentences, or even pages of a book. However, the first and second volumes of *Afghanistan in the Course of History*, which are the first scholarly and analytical history of the country, remained intact and did not suffer any distortion by the government censorship because the despotic government banned the first volume totally and the second volume was never given to them. Later the first volume was printed abroad several times and the second volume, which could not be published during the tyrannical regime of the time, is now available in print abroad, both in original Persian and in English translation.

\* \* \*



**Mir Gholam Mohammad Ghoobar In His Youth**



**The Last Picture Of Mir Gholam Mohammad Gobar**

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